THE HOWADJI IN SYRIA.

BY

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

"I am a part of all that I have met,
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Gleams that untravell'd world whose margin fades
Forever and forever, when I move."

TENNYSON.

"Gottes ist der Orient,
Gottes ist der Occident,
Nord-und südliches Gelände
Ruht im Frieden seiner Hände."

GOETHE.

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TO THE PACHA.

My dear Friend,—

In making you the Pacha of two tales, I confess with the Syrians, that a friend is fairer than the roses of Damascus, and more costly than the pearls of Omman.

You, of all men, will not be surprised by these pages, for you shared with me the fascination of novelty in those eldest lands,—which interpreted to us both that pleasant story of Raphael.

When his friend, Marc Antonio, discovered him engaged upon the Sistine picture and exclaimed,

—"*Cospetto!* another Madonna?"

Raphael gravely answered,

—"*Amico mio*, my friend, were all artists to paint her portrait forever, they could never exhaust her beauty."

New York, March, 1852.

" With a hoste of furious fancies,
Whereof I am Commander.
With a burning spear,
And a horse of the ayr,
To the wilderness I wander."

Mad Tom of Bedlam.

" Why should we be of the tribe of Manasseh, when we can wander with Esau? Why should we kick against the pricks, when we can walk on roses? Why should we be owls, when we can be eagles?" *Keats.*

" For us the winds do blow,
The earth doth rest, heaven move, and fountains flow:
Nothing we see but means our good,
As our delight, or as our treasure,
The whole is either our cupboard of food,
Or cabinet of pleasure."

George Herbert.

" And they three passed over the white sands between the rocks, silent as the shadows "

Coleridge.

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THE DESERT.

I.

GRAND CAIRO.

"THE camels are ready," said the commander, our dragoman.

And I turned for a last glimpse of Cairo, from the lofty window of the hotel over the Uzbeekeeyah, or public garden. The sun was sinking toward the Pyramids, and my eyes, that perceived their faint outline through the warm air, were fascinated for the last time by their grandeur and mystery.

I held a letter in my hand. It was dated several weeks before in Berlin, and its incredible tales of cold, thin twilight for day, of leafless trees, and of bitter and blasting winds, were like ice in the sherbet of the oriental scene my eyes were draining.

Beneath the balcony was the rounded fullness of acacia groves, and, glancing along the lights and shadows of the avenues, I marked the costumes whose picturesqueness is poetry. The glaring white walls of plaster palaces, and the hareems of pachas rose irregularly beyond, cool with dark green blinds, and relieving the slim minarets that

played, fountains of grace, in the brilliant air. It was a great metropolis, but silent as Venice. Only the *ha-ha* of the donkey-boys, the guttural growl of the camels, or the sharp crack of the runner's whip that precedes a carriage, jarred the pensive silence of the sun.

I read another passage in the wintry letter I held, and remembered Berlin, Europe, and the North, as spirits in paradise recall the glacial limbo of the Inferno.

—"The camels are ready," said the sententious commander.

"Yes," answered the Howadji, and stepped out upon the balcony.

The Arabian poets celebrate the beauty of Cairo. "*Misr*, without an equal, the mother of the world, the superb town, the holy city, the delight of the imagination, greatest among the great, whose splendor and opulence made the Prophet smile."

Nor the Prophet only. For even to Frank and Infidel eyes it is the most beautiful of Eastern cities.

It is not so purely oriental as Damascus, nor can it rival the splendor of the Syrian capital, as seen from a distance; but, architecturally, Cairo is the triumph of the Arabian genius. It woos the eye and admiration of the stranger with more than Muslim

propriety. Damascus is a dream of beauty as you approach it. But the secret charm of that beauty, when you are within the walls, is discovered only by penetrating deeper and farther into its exquisite courts, and gardens, and interiors, as you must strip away the veils and clumsy outer robes, to behold the beauty of the Circassian or Georgian slave.

Prince Soltikoff, a Russian Sybarite, who winters upon the Nile as Englishmen summer upon the Rhine, agreed that to the eye of the stranger in its streets, Cairo was unsurpassed.

"But Ispahan?" I suggested: for the Prince chats of Persia as men gossip of Paris, and illuminates his conversation with the glory of the Ganges.

"Persia has nothing so fair," replied the Prince. "Leave Ispahan and Teheran unvisited, save by your imagination, and always take Cairo as the key-note of your Eastern recollections."

It is built upon the edge of the desert, as other cities stand upon the sea-shore. The sand stretches to the walls, girdling "the delight of the imagination" with a mystery and silence profounder than that of the ocean.

It is impossible not to feel here, as elsewhere in the East, that the national character and manners are influenced by the desert, as those of maritime races by the sea. This fateful repose, this strange

stillness, this universal melancholy in men's aspects, and in their voices, as you note them in quiet conversation, or in the musical pathos of the muezzin's cry—the intent but composed eagerness with which they listen to the wild romances of the desert, for which even the donkey-boy pauses, and stands, leaning upon his arms across his beast, and following in imagination the fortunes of Aboo Seyd, or the richer romances of the Thousand and One Nights—all this is of the desert—this is its silence articulated in art and life.

The bazaars and busy streets of Cairo are as much thronged as the quays of Naples. Through the narrow ways swarms a motley multitude, either walking or bestriding donkeys, but the wealthier and official personages upon foot. The shouts of the donkey-boys are incessant, and when a pacha's coming is announced by the imperative crack of the long whip, flourished by an Arab runner in short white drawers and tarboosh or red cap, the excitement and confusion in a street which a carriage almost chokes, become frenzied. The conceited camels groping through the crowd, are jammed and pushed against the horses; the donkestrians are flattened sideways in the same manner. Pedlers of all kinds crowd to the wall, there is a general quarrelling and scolding as if every individual were aggrieved that any other

should presume to be in the way, while suddenly in the midst, through the lane of all this lazy and cackling life, rumbles the huge carriage, bearing a white-bearded, fat Turk to the council or the hareem. Only the little donkeys stand then for democracy, and persist in retaining their tails where, for purposes of honorable obeisance to the dignitary, their heads should be, and receive a slashing cut for their inflexible adherence to principles.

Through this restless crowd in the dim, unpaven, high-walled streets of Cairo, strings of camels perpetually pass, threading the murmurous city life with the desert silence. They are like the mariners in tarpaulins and pea-jackets, who roll through the streets of sea-ports and assert the sea. For the slow, soft tread of the camel, his long, swaying movement, his amorphous and withered frame, and his level-lidded, unhuman, and repulsive eyes, like the eyes of demons, remind the Cairene of the desert, and confirm the mood of melancholy in his mind.

The donkey is the feet and carriage of the Cairene.

Old Beppo, the legless beggar of the Spanish steps in Rome, given to fame by Hans Christian Andersen, in his Improvisatore, was oriental in many ways, but most in the luxury of the donkey, with which he indulged himself. And, practically,

the Cairenes might be all legless Beppos. With the huge red slippers dangling at the sides of the tottering little beasts, the toes turned upward in an imbecile manner, and gliding at right-angles with the animal just above the ground—the sad-eyed, solemn Cairene would hardly enamour the least fastidious of houris, should he so caracole to the gates of paradise.

The donkeys are like large dogs, and of easy motion. Each is attended by a boy, who batters and punches him behind. Your cue is resignation. You are only the burden borne. Nor is it consonant with your dignity to treat as a horse an animal that scarcely holds your feet above the ground, and that occasionally tumbles from under you, leaving you standing in a picturesque bazaar, the butt of Muslim youth.

And wo to you if on your cockle-shell of a donkey you encounter the full-freighted galleon of a camel. Dismount, stop, fly—or a bale of Aleppo gold-stuffs or brilliant carpets from Bagdad, surging along upon the camel, will dash you and your donkey, miserable wrecks, against the sides of the bazaar.

—"The camels are ready."

"*Täib, täib kateir*, good, very good, commander, but bear a moment longer, while I gaze finally from the balcony and remember Cairo."

You will go daily to the bazaar, because its picturesque suggestions are endless, and because the way leads you by the spacious mosques, broadly striped with red and blue, and because in the shaded silence of the interior you will see the strange spectacle of a house of God made also a house of man. There congregate the poor and homeless, and ply their trades. At nightfall, as some rich pilgrim turns away, he orders the sakka, or water-carrier, to distribute the contents of his water-skin among the poor. In the silence, and under the stars, as he pours the water into the wooden bowls of the beggars, the sakka exclaims, "Hasten, O thirsty, to the ways of God!"—then breaks into a mournful singing—"Paradise and forgiveness be the lot of him who gave you this water."

By day and night, a fountain plays in the centre of the court, singing and praising God. The children play with it, and sleep upon the marble pavement. The old men crone in the shadow and moulder in the sun. The birds flutter and fly, and alight upon the delicate points of the ornaments, and wheeling, the pavement ripples in their waving shadow. Five times a day the muezzin calls from the minaret, "God is great, come to prayer," and at midnight—"Prayer is better than sleep," and at daybreak—"Blessing and peace be upon

thee, O Prophet of God, O Comely of Countenance!"

You pass on to the bazaars.

No aspect of life in any city is so exciting to the imagination as the oriental bazaars. They are narrow streets, walled by the lofty houses from whose fronts project elaborate lattices, and on each side is a continuous line of shops, which are small square cells in the houses, entirely open to the street, and raised two or three feet above it. Over the whole, between the house-tops, is stretched a canopy of matting, shutting out the sky.

In the little niches, or shops, surrounded by their wares, sit the turbanned merchants, silent or chatting solemnly, smoking and sipping coffee, or bending and muttering in prayer.

A soft, mellow shadow permeates the space, or golden glints of sunlight flash through the rents in the matting above. There is no noise but the hushed murmuring of a crowd, sometimes the sharp oath of a donkey-driver, or the clear, vibrating call of the muezzin.

As we move slowly through the bazaar, and our donkey-boy shouts imperatively, "O old man, depart, depart: O maiden, fly, the Howadji comes, he comes, he comes"—the merchants scan us gravely through the clouds that curl from their chibouques.

But the eyes of one among them sparkle graciously.

It is a friend of the commander's who purposes to take gold from the unbelievers, and at his niche we alight, and the old men and maidens fly no longer. The merchant spreads for us a prayer-carpet from Bagdad, or a Persian rug, upon which we seat ourselves, while chibouques are lighted, and a small, soft-eyed Arab boy runs to the neighboring café, and returns with rich, sweet coffee.

"The Howadji are Ingleez?" is the amicable prelude of business.

"No. The Howadji are not Ingleez, but Americani."

It is a terra incognita to the swarthy Turk, who fancies it is some island in the Red Sea, or a barbaric dependence of Bagdad.

The opposite neighbor hails his brother merchant in an unknown dialect—unknown to the ear, but the suspicious heart interprets its meaning—"Allah is Allah, O my brother; praise God who has this day delivered goodly fish into thy net." The lazy loiterers gather around the spot. When they are too many, the commander suddenly swears a vehement oath, and disperses the rabble with his kurbash, or hippopotamus whip.

The merchant, gravely courteous, reveals his

treasures, little dreaming that they are inestimable to the eyes that contemplate them. His wares make poets of his customers, who are sure that the Eastern poets must have passed life in an endless round of shopping.

Here are silk stuffs from Damascus and Aleppo; cambric from the district of Nablous, near the well of Jacob; gold and silver threads from Mount Lebanon; keffie, the Bedoueen handkerchiefs from Mecca, and fabrics of delicate device from Damascus blend their charm with the Anadolian carpets of gorgeous tissue. The fruits of Hamas hang beyond—dried fruits and blades from Celo Syria—pistachios from Aleppo, and over them strange Persian rugs.

The eye feasts upon splendor. The wares are often clumsy, inconvenient, and unshapely. The coarsest linen is embroidered with the finest gold. It is a banquet of the crude elements of beauty, unrefined by taste. It is the pure pigment unworked into the picture.

But the contemplation of these articles, of name and association so alluring, and the calm curiosity of the soft eyes, that watch you in the dimness of the Bazaar, gradually soothe your mind like sleep, and you sit by the merchant in pleasant reverie. You buy as long and as much as you can. Have rhymes, and colors, and fancies prices?

The courteous merchant asks fabulous sums for his wares, and you courteously offer a tenth or a twentieth of his demand. He looks grieved, and smokes. You smoke, and look resigned.

"Have the Howadji reflected that this delicate linen fabric (it is coarse crash) comes from Bagdad, upon camels, over the desert?"

They have, indeed, meditated that fact.

"Are these opulent strangers aware that the sum they mention would plunge an unhappy merchant into irretrievable ruin?"

The thought severs the heart-strings of the opulent strangers. But are their resources rivers, whose sands are gold?

—And the soft-eyed Arab boy is dispatched for fresh coffee.

We wear away the day in this delightful traffic. It has been a rhetorical tilt. We have talked, and lived, and bought, poetry, and at twilight our treasures follow us to the hotel.

We discover that we have procured oriental garments that we cannot wear, which are probably second-hand, and impart a peculiar odor, making us wonder how the plague smells. We have various beautiful caps, that heat our heads—choice Turkish slippers that tumble us down stairs—Damascus blades that break with a little bending—spices and

odors of blessed Araby that we surreptitiously eject at back windows—and gold-threaded napkins of Arabian linen, that let our fingers through in the using.

Yet for these oriental luxuries we have not paid more than a dozen times their value; and when, after a surfeit of sentiment, did poets ever awake without the headache?

The solemn pomp of this oriental shopping, however, is no less pathetic than poetic. The merchant higgles in phrases of exquisite imagery, which may be, with him, only hacknied forms of words; but are the sadder for that reason. It is not difficult to infer the characteristic influences of a people, whose natural speech is poetry. And the pathos is in the constant reference of this style of speech to a corresponding life.

Yet the Arabian genius has never attained that life. The Thousand and One Nights are its highest literary, the Kingdom of the Caliphs its most substantial political, and Islam its best religious, achievement. That genius creates no longer, and for the modern Muslim, only the traditions of these things remain. The poets at the cafés tell the old tales. The splendors of the Caliphat flash, a boreal brilliance, over an unreal past; and Islam wanes and withers in its sunny mosques.

Thus oriental life is an echo and a ghost. Even its ludicrousness is relieved and sobered by its necessary sadness. You are pursued by the phantom of unachieved success; you stumble among ruined opportunities; it is a sphere unoccupied, a body uninformed.

Strangely and slowly gathers in your mind the conviction that the last inhabitants of the oldest land have thus a mysterious sympathy of similarity with the aborigines of the youngest.

For what more are these orientals than sumptuous savages?

As the Indian dwells in primeval forests, whose soil teems with mineral treasure, in whose rocks and trees are latent temples greater than Solomon's and the Parthenon, and statues beyond the Greek; in whose fruits are the secrets of trade, commerce, and the extremest civilization, and who yet gets from the trees but a slight canoe, and from the earth but a flint, and from all the infinite suggestions of nature, nothing but a picturesque speech,—so lives the Oriental, the pet of natural luxury, in a golden air, at the fountains of History, and Art, and Religion; and yet the thinnest gleanings of stripped fields would surpass his harvest.

The likeness follows into their speech and manner. The Indian still bears with him the air of si-

lence and grandeur that inheres in his birth-place, and in the influences of his life. The sun, and the wind, and the trees, have still their part in him, and assert their child. They shine, and blow, and wave, through his motions and his words. Like a Queen's idiot boy, he has the air of royalty.

Nor does the Oriental fail in dignity and repose. His appearance satisfies your imagination no less than your eye. No other race has his beauty of countenance, and grace of costume; nowhere else is poetry the language of trade. His gravity becomes tragic, then, when it seems to you a vague consciousness of inadequacy to his position, the wise silence of a witless man.

—We have, then, a common mother, and the silence of the western is kin to that of the eastern sky.

Have we sailed so far, Pacha, to stand in the balcony looking over the Arabian metropolis, and smiling with the Prophet at its splendor and opulence, to discover that our musings are the same as in the crest of a primeval pine, or on the solitary mound of a prairie?

"The camels are ready—"

"Yes, commander, and so are the Howadji."

The sun was nearing the pyramids, and doubly beautiful in the afternoon, "the delight of the ima-

gination" lay silent before us, a superb slave, compelling our admiration. I lingered and lingered upon the little balcony. *Ha-ha*, said the donkey-boys beneath, and I leaned over and saw a hareem trotting along. The camels lay under the trees, and a turbanned group, like the wise men at the manger, in old pictures, awaited our departure with languid curiosity.

The Pacha descended the stairs, and I followed him, just as the commander announced for the twelfth time—

"The camels are ready."

II.

DEPARTURE.

The camels lay patiently under the trees before the door, quietly ruminating. Our caravan consisted of seven, four of which had been loaded and sent forward with their drivers, and were to halt at a village beyond the city, the other three awaited the pleasure of the Howadji and the commander.

If the mystery of the desert had inspired any terror in our minds, surely the commander presented at that moment ample consolation.

For several days before our departure, the astute Mohammed had indulged in stories of desert dangers, and, when he conceived that our minds were sufficiently exercised, he began his overtures for the purchase of swords, guns, pistols, and weapons of all kinds and calibres, to secure us against the perils of the wilderness. The Pacha had brought a gun from Malta, and Nero had bequeathed me a pie-knife, of goodly strength and size, which had done admirable execution upon the pigeon-pasties of the Nile, for which the gun had furnished the material.

This was the sum of our arsenal, and in consideration of the fact that we should hardly be attacked by any force whose numbers would not insure victory, it seemed useless to provide more.

But the alarmed commander, having testified that there was but one God, and that Mohammed was his prophet, farther testified that one gun and a pie-knife were flagrantly insufficient against the Bedoueen of the desert. The Howadji, therefore, yielded, and the commander, having increased my store by a pair of English pocket-pistols, gave me a bag of bullets which I placed at the bottom of my portmanteau, and a box of percussion caps which I requested him to carry.

So we descended, armed for the desert.

The Pacha carried his gun, and I was girded over the shoulder with a strap holding the pistols; but it was so inconveniently short, that my left arm could hardly hang straight. We wore upon our heads, wide-awakes or slouched beavers, wreathed with a heavy fold of linen, which "the opulent strangers" had been assured was the work of Persian looms, and misgiving that the sun would be more formidable than the Bedoueen, I concealed a pair of blue wire-gauze goggles in my pocket.

For the rest, we differed little from any gentle-

men mounting their horses for an evening ride. But the commander was a spectacle.

He was a walking arsenal. The mild Muslim was swathed in steel bandages of cutlasses, knives of various sanguinary devices, and shining tubes of pistols. The belts of these weapons entangled him in crimson net-work, and even had the scabbards of the swords and daggers not been cased in leather and inextricably knotted to their handles, so that in no extremity of peril could he ever have drawn a blade—yet he was so burdened and bound that he could neither have wielded a weapon nor have run away. As the latter was the commander's great military movement, I was as much perplexed as concerned at his appearance, until I reflected that he would conduct his retreat and escape with his many machines of war upon the back of his camel.

I confess a certain degree of satisfaction in the contemplation of this array of defensive appliances. In a sudden crisis it seemed only necessary that all parties should rush upon the commander, as roused soldiers to their stacks of arms, and liberally furnished from his exhaustless stores, give endless battle to any foe.

He was a diamond edition of the Turkish army. It were unfair to suppose that he had not adjusted his means to his conscious power, and what on-

slaughts and carnage were implied in his appearance! What unfought Marathons and symbolical sieges of Troy were moving, in his awful accoutrements, around the court of Shepherd's Hotel! Regarding the air of the movement, you would have sworn a union of Ajax and Achilles—looking in the eye, you would have owned Ulysses, but surveying the surprising whole, nothing less than impregnable Troy and all catapultic Greece had satisfied your fancy.

—It was time to mount, and the farewells must be spoken.

You, Nera, have not forgotten that last Cairene afternoon, nor the sorrow that the charmed evenings of the Nile were not to be renewed upon the desert, nor the warm wishes, that like gentle gales, should waft your barque to Greece. Neither have the Howadji lost from memory the figure that stood in the great sunny door, waving a slow hand of farewell, nor the eyes that looked, not without haziness and tearful mist, toward the uncertainty of the desert.

Addio, Nera!

With the words trembling upon my tongue, and half looking back and muttering last words, I laid my left hand carelessly upon the back of the recumbent camel to throw myself leisurely into the seat.

I had seen camels constantly for two months, and had condemned them as the slowest and most conceited of brutes. I had supposed an elephantine languor in every motion, and had anticipated a luxurious cradling over the desert in their rocking gait, for to the exoteric eye their movement is imaged by the lazy swell of summer waves.

The saddle is a wooden frame, with a small upright stake, both in front and behind. Between these stakes, and upon the frame, are laid the blankets, carpets, and other woollen conveniences for riding. Over all is thrown the brilliant Persian rug. The true method of mounting is to grasp the stakes in each hand, and to swing yourself rapidly and suddenly into the seat, while the camel driver—if you are luxurious and timid—holds his foot upon the bent fore-knee of the camel. Once in the seat you must cling closely, through the three convulsive spasms of rising and righting, two of which jerk you violently forward and one backward.

This is a very simple mystery. But I was ignorant, and did not observe that no camel driver was at the head of my beast. In fact, I only observed that the great blue cotton umbrella, covered with white cloth, and the two water jugs dangling from the rear stake of my saddle, were a ludcrious com bination of luxury and necessity, and ready to

mount, I laid my hand as carelessly and leisurely upon the front stake as if my camel had been a cow.

But scarcely had my right foot left the earth on its meditative way to the other side of the saddle, than the camel snorted, threw back his head, and sprang up as nimbly as a colt.

I, meanwhile, was left dangling with the blue cotton umbrella, and the water jugs at the side, several feet from the ground, and made an abortive grasp at the rear stake. But I only clutched the luxuries, and down we fell, Howadji, pocket-pistols, umbrella, and water jugs in a confused heap.

The good commander arrived at the scene as soon as the arsenal permitted, and swore fiercely at the Arabs from the midst of his net-work of weapons. Then, very blandly, he instructed me in the mystery of camel-climbing, and in a few minutes we were on the way to Jerusalem

III.

OUTSKIRTS.

With the first swing of the camel, Egypt and the Nile began to recede. With this shuttle the desert was to be woven into the web of my life. To share that moment's feeling, sympathetic reader, you must recall the change of horses at La Storta, the last post to Rome, and gild the sensation with oriental glory.

We paced through the outskirts of the city. The streets were narrow and dirty as we approached the gate, although they wound under beautiful lattices, and palms drooped over the roofs. Sore-eyed children played around the houses. Barbers were shaving men who kneeled and rested their heads in the barber's lap. Flabby women, in draggling, coarse veils, and scant, filthy garments, loitered by, with trays of thin cakes upon their heads.

Through the grated windows of the mosque, we saw the silent devotee steeped in the red light of the westering sun, and dreaming in his squalid rags, which the sun's golden finger touched into a gor-

gecus robe, of the paradise where "the comely of countenance" should, even so, surfeit his lean soul with bliss.

"For thus," says quaint old Burton of the Saracen, "he fats himself with future joys."

We rode superior to the scene, upon our lofty camels. They swayed gently along, and occasionally swung their heads and long necks awkwardly aside to peer through the lattices, and suffer their eyes to browse upon hidden beauty, as the "large, calm eyes" of the sea-snake feed upon the mermaid, in Tennyson's poem.

The old silence and sadness, whose spell I had constantly felt in Cairo, brooded over "the superb town, the holy city," to the last. As we passed out of the gate into the desert, no hope called after us.

The suburbs of "the mother of the world" are tombs. In the desert, death beleaguers the city, and you can well fancy that the melancholy genius of the people seeks to propitiate the awful enemy by these stately and solitary buildings, grouped beyond the walls in the sand. Even as Andromeda, the king's own child, was exposed to the common foe, so, upon these wild sands, instinctive nature seems to aim at appeasing the hereditary enemy, by the beautiful persuasion of art. These tombs

are of the finest oriental architecture. They hold the ashes of sultans and caliphs whose names are remembered by nothing else. They are mosques no less than tombs, and travellers, leaving or entering the city, pause in them to pray.

But their austerity is unrelieved by the gladness of any green thing. Over our western graves, we love the sweet consolations of nature; and the year, changing from flower to fading leaf, in gracious imagery renews forever the mystery of life, and, with almost human sympathy, insists upon immortality. But the changeless year glides unsympathizing over Arabian graves. He is doubly dead, who is buried in the desert.

As we advanced, we saw more plainly the blank sand that overspread the earth, from us to the eastern horizon. Out of its illimitable reaches paced strings of camels, with swarthy Arabs. Single horsemen, and parties upon donkeys, ambled quietly by. The huge white plaster palace, which Abbas Pacha was building upon the edge of the desert, swarmed with workmen, and his army of boys was encamped upon the sands beyond. Our path lay northward, along the line where the greenness of the Nile-valley blends with the desert. There was a little scant shrubbery upon the sides of the way—groves of mimosa, through which stretched

the light sand, almost like a road; and towards the west lay the gardens of Shoobra, a summer palace of Mehemet Ali, palm-fringed along the shore.

As the sun set, I turned upon my camel, and saw Grand Cairo for the last time.

One summer day, in Switzerland, as I climbed the Faulhorn, I saw suddenly in a dark tarn below me the unbroken image of the snow-summitted Wetterhorn, which was miles away, beyond the valley of Grindelwald. Every point of each solitary snow-spire glittered entire, and the tarn was filled with the majestic apparition. So lay the vision of cathedral sublimity, pure, perfect, and impossible, in the mind of Michael-Angelo.

But here the dream of a different genius was made visible. If that was grand and austere, how exquisite was this! The delicate grace of the grove of minarets clustering in the glowing sunset, revealed the image of an eastern poet's mind, and the voice of the muezzin that vibrated to our ears and died in a tranquil heaven, touched them as tenderly as the aerial outline struck the eye.

Many an evening I had floated upon the lagune of Venice, homeward from the Lido. But the rocking gondola that bore me to the feet of the Queen of the Adriatic is not more passionately

remembered than the swaying camel, that at the same moment of the day bore me away from "the mother of the world."

A lofty obelisk rose between us and the west. Our eyes clung to it in passing, for it marked the site of Heliopolis the magnificent, the city of the sun. Plato went to school there, and Moses, and thither came Joseph bringing the young child and his mother. It is a mass of sand mounds now, and a few inarticulate stone relics. But in its midst lies a pleasant garden, whose flowers wave around the base of the great obelisk on which the hieroglyphics are covered by the cells of wild bees.

At Heliopolis, also, the phenix built its funeral pyre, and rose from the "Medean alchemy" of its own ashes.

Yet in that moment, plodding along on the top of the camel, I turned and gazed at Heliopolis very tranquilly. I have looked with as much excitement at King Philip's Mount Hope, as I sailed down Narragansett Bay. This tranquillity, however, was not indifference, or satiety, or ignorance. I was conscious that the place and the moment, the memories and anticipations with which my life was overflowing in that sunset had acclimated me to this height of interest, so that I breathed its air naturally.

Nothing could have really surprised Ixion after the first draught of nectar. That gave him, in a goblet, the freedom of Heaven. A man who has sailed for two months upon the Nile, encounters the desert with an emotion none the less profound because it is placid.

Eastern enthusiasm is undoubtedly suspected. The filth, fanaticism, and inconvenience of the East are not to be denied, nor the alarming proportion of vermin to people in oriental cities. Therefore, whoever sees in a mosque only red and white plaster, or in the Parthenon but a mass of broken marble, should not expose himself to the trouble of contemplating those objects. There are prints of them engraved with restored proportions, a travelling and thinking made easy, much preferable to the ocular experience of those agile travellers who overrun all Europe in three months.

When once you are admitted *ad eundem* in that enthusiasm, however, you will readily forgive the suspicion of all under-graduates. Looking at the East through your experience, and confessing that "we want from nature but the first, few primitive notes, in us lies the true melody, with its endless variations"—you will bear with the most judicious doubts and the most sensible shrugs, as the astronomer, stealing through his telescope the secrets of

the moon, tolerates the plain common sense which asserts that it is all green cheese.

I remember when Tadpole came home from Italy. He seemed to me like one who had basked in the latest smile of my absent mistress. I greeted him as poor Arabs in a desert village greet the Hadji or pilgrim who returns from Mecca, and has seen the Prophet's tomb and the holy stone. On the most Italian of June evenings we strolled together in the moonlight, and renewed in our words the romance of the South.

He listened courteously and quietly. I loved his silence, in which I perceived the repose of May days in Naples. The smoke curled languidly from his cigar, and we heard the beat of oars upon the tranquil bay.

"Yes," he said at last—"I know—it was certainly so. But frankly—do you not think the fleas balance the fascination?"

Tadpole has the reputation and privilege of a travelled man. He brought shell necklaces from Venice, and corals from Naples, and scarfs from Rome—but, for all that, he has never been in Italy.

IV.

ENCAMPING.

The evening darkened, and we paced along in perfect silence.

The stars shone with the crisp brilliancy of our January nights, but the air was balmy, veined occasionally with a streak of strange warmth, which I knew was the breath of the desert. Under the palms, along the edges of cultivated fields we passed, a spectral procession, and I caught at times the fragment of a song from the shekh who led the way.

The Arabs who had gone forward with the pack camels, were to encamp just beyond a little town which we entered after dark. It was a collection of mud hovels, and we reflected with satisfaction upon the accommodation of our new tent, and the refreshing repose it promised.

Lost in pleasing anticipations, we scarcely observed that our line of march was suddenly altered, and I had barely time to save my head from violent contact with the stone cross-piece of a huge gate—

when we perceived that we were in a caravanseri or khan.

Now a khan in oriental literature,—in parts of Persia and in Damascus, as we shall hereafter see, is no less beautiful than convenient. But this khan in the small mud town was a square court, of the character and dignity of a sheep-fold, and by no means suited our anticipations of a desert camp.

It was dark within the enclosure, but the scene was picturesque.

By the light of two or three torches we could see our camels and those of other travellers lying upon the ground. Groups of Arabs, and Egyptian merchants sat around the sides of the yard, with their long chibouques, and arranged for the night. In the middle of the court was a well, and around it were piled our camp equipage and our luggage, which the Arabs had cunningly removed from the camels. Upon entering, my camel snorted and sighed with satisfaction, and immediately knelt, delighted with the prospect and the society. But there was very ominous silence on all sides.

We were sufficiently accustomed to the people to understand that this was the trial of mastery between us. The arrangement of encamping outside the town was perfectly comprehended by the Arabs, but they wisely wished to test our metal.

The Howadji were not at all sorry, and after a preliminary burst of surprise and indignation, they ordered the camels to be instantly reloaded, which was a work of no little time.

The Arabs expostulated in the most astonishing manner.

"What! desert this agreeable khan—this sweet security from thieves and the nameless dangers of the desert! Load the camels for a journey of a few minutes, when all was so comfortably arranged for the night! It was only a pleasantry of the benign Howadji."

The groups of turbans and ample drapery emitted meditative smoke, and complacently watched and listened. Our Arabs scolded and conversed apart with Mohammed, and he, the timorous commander, made peace with the enemy, and attempted to wheedle his allies. But the command to reload was sternly repeated, and in the course of an hour we moved triumphantly out of the khan at the head of our caravan. A few steps beyond the town brought us to the white-domed tomb of a shekh, just on the edge of the desert, and there the camping-ground was chosen.

In a few minutes our desert palace was built. It was a new white tent, and of circular form, to facilitate the pitching. The pole was planted upon

a spot indicated by the Pacha, and the canvass was rapidly laid over and stretched to the pegs. The riding camels were then led up, and made to kneel while the carpets, blankets, and matting were removed from the saddle. We laid the matting upon the sand, spread over it a coarse, thick carpeting, and covered the whole with two Persian rugs, one upon each side of the pole. The travelling-bags were then thrown in, and we commenced Arabian housekeeping.

The commander's tent was pitched at a little distance, and into that were conveyed the chests of cooking-utensils, and the household-furniture. He built a fire near by, and put on some leathery water to boil.

The camels, growling and grumbling, lay outside the camp. The fire flashed over the motley figures of the Arabs crouching over it, and looking into it with melancholy eyes. The commander, chagrined that his active duties must commence that evening, and vexed at the result of his diplomacy in the khan, moved sulkily and silently among the pots and pans, while the Howadji sat smoking in the tent, whose yellow-lined sides drawn back at the door, framed the picture. All around, the black night closed us in, blacker and more mysterious for the sense of the dumb desert that lay in it. Out of that desert, low,

fitful gusts stole through the darkness, and puffed and played with the fire as with a glittering toy. And as the flame mounted and strained in the wind's embrace, it flashed upon the white blank of the tomb, and shrank again among the Arabs, affrighted.

The commander donned the golden-sleeve and brought us tea. It was placed on an irregular circular stool, five or six inches high, which served as our desert-table. There was more than the original flavor of China and the derived flavor of leather-bottles in that tea; for it tasted of pleasant firesides and remembered tables, and, by the vivid contrast, as by a song of home, plunged us more remotely into the wilderness.

That ceremony over and another chibouque smoked, we lay down to sleep. We had brought no iron bedsteads as many wisely do; but I was not sorry to feel that I was lying on the desert.

Once, at midnight, in a ship at sea, I awoke and was conscious of the gentle rocking of the ocean. I knew that the moon was bright upon the canvass above, that even the studding-sails were set, and that the odors of Portugal were in the air. I knew that a strong hand was at the wheel, and a faithful eye at the bow, and that the fleet Nebraska was staunch and sure.

But in that moment, a speck upon a chip in the

wilderness of waters, my sense of confidence was in the slow sway of the ocean. For the motion was gentle as that of a mother with a sleeping child, and the languid creak of the rigging, like a nurse's drowsy croning. It was a feeling of life, and the faith that life always inspires.

But when I stretched myself upon the desert, and perceived its slight unevenness, like the undulation of the sea, stiffened forever, and heard only the breathing of camels—strange, demoniac animals—and the rustle of ghostly winds from the desert and the darkness, I was penetrated with a sense of death, and felt how much more awful is the desert than the sea.

I lay long awake, in reveries, stranger than dreams, then fell into a doze—a limbo of fantastic fancies—then was aware of a strange sound in the night. In that environment of death, it was like the wail of the banshee. It was near and far, and filled all the air—a melancholy cry, that died through rich lingering cadences into the extremest distance, then poured its plaintive sweetness into the silence that clung, saddened, more closely to my heart.

I did not know that it was the muezzin's cry. In that pathetic wail I did not hear, as the faithful heard, *Al-lá-hu-Ak-bar*. There is no god but God.

V.

THE CAMEL.

The sun was a sluggard next morning. We were up with the last stars, and as I pushed aside the tent curtains before dawn, I saw the constellations that are the glory of our western evenings. Orion and the Pleiades were sinking in the west. The stars descended so near to the horizon that we seemed to be embowered in them. They are naturally worshipped in the desert, those friendly, solitary wanderers through space, not unlike the lonely voyagers of the wilderness.

Hot water, tea, toast, and a chibouque, were things of a moment. There was no luxurious smoking, however, in those early hours. Tents were falling, camels loading and growling, Arabs scolding and swearing; there was the hurry of awaking, the dispatch of day, and the commander putting on his arsenal. I say "dispatch," and a chorus of camels from the desert snorts me to scorn. But an hour and a half usually sufficed for the matutinal ceremonies. Then a few cinders and scattered straws

upon the sand, were the remains of our pleasant desert. pavilion, and falling into line, tied by the halter to the preceding tail, the camels move on, and the caravan proceeded.

A camel excites no sentiment or affection in the Western, nor did I observe any indication of the Arab's love for the animal. He is singularly adapted to his business of walking over the desert; but is awkward and cross, and destitute of any agreeable trait. His motion is ludicrously stiff and slow. He advances as if his advent were the coming of grace and beauty, and the carriage of his neck and head is comically conceited, beyond words. My camel never suggested a pleasurable emotion to me but once, and that was on this first morning, when, as we moved from the camp, he lifted his head toward the desert and sniffed, as if he tasted home and his natural freedom in the unpolluted air.

The camels seem to be only half tamed; and sometimes, seduced by the fascination of the desert's breath, they break from the caravan, and dash away in a wild grotesque trot, straight into the grim silence of the wilderness, bearing the luckless Howadji upon a voyage too vague, and pursued by the yells and moans of the Bedoueen. They are guided by a halter, slipped behind their ears and over the nose, and they swing their flexile necks like ostriches. In

the first desert days, I sometimes thought to alter the direction of my beast by pulling the halter. But I gathered in its whole length, hand over hand, and only drew the long neck quite round, so that the great stupid head was almost between my knees, and the hateful eyes stared mockingly at my own. I learned afterward to guide the animal by touching the side of the neck with a stick.

The Pacha's was a smaller beast than mine, and looked and acted like a cassowary. The Arabs called him El Shiraz, and the commander's was dubbed Pomegranate by the same relentless poets. Mine was an immense and formidable brute. He was called by a name which seemed to me, naturally enough, to sound like Boobie, a name which the commander interpreted to be one of the titles of a beautiful woman. But the great, scrawny, sandy, bald back of his head, and his general rusty toughness and clumsiness, insensibly begot for him in my mind the name of MacWhirter, and by that name he was known so long as I knew him.

The motion of the camel, which is represented as very wearisome, we found to be soothing. The monotonous swing made me intolerably drowsy in the still, warm mornings, and the dragomen tell tales of Howadji who drop asleep as they ride, and who, losing their balance, break arms, legs, and

necks, in their fall to the ground. The tedium of camel-riding is its sluggishness; for although the beasts can trot so that sultans and caliphs have dispatched expresses in eight days from Cairo to Damascus, yet the trot of the usual travelling camel is very hard. The Pacha's El Shiraz had a sufficiently pleasant trotting gait; but MacWhirter's exertions in that kind shook my soul within me.

Yet with all this, the effect of the motion of the camel, separated from his awkward and ridiculous form and its details, is stately and dignified. So much so, indeed, that the imagination would select him, first, as the bearer of a dignitary in a pageant. covered with long sweeping draperies, which should Conceal him entirely, and his rounded hump spread with heavy carpets, he presents a moving throne for a caliph or a sultan, in his desert progress, of dignity unsurpassed. The rider sits supreme above the animal, and over the earth, and the long languid movement harmonizes with the magnificent monotony of the scene.

When the sun rose, our caravan was quietly making its two-and-a-half miles an hour. It advanced not more rapidly than a small boy's walking, for at the head of the train, with the halter of the forward camel drawn over his shoulder, marched the young Hamed, an Arab boy of ten years, whose father was

the shekh and presiding genius of the caravan, and whose white-headed grandfather, ambling by our sides upon a little donkey which he quite enveloped and concealed in his flowing garments, was our un invited guest. There were two or three other men as assistants, all friends or relatives of the shekh, and we went forward, a quiet family-party, in the fresh March morning.

We had encamped upon the verge of the desert, and leaving the green land as we started, our route now lay parallel with the line of green, and not more than a quarter of a mile away from it. Yet that line was as distinct as the shore from the sea, and we renewed upon the desert the vision of the Nile-landscape.

Our western horizon was an endless forest of palms, with which mingled occasional minarets. The east was a hard level line of monotonous gray. My eyes clung to the greenness and beauty of the river, although in the clear daylight the awfulness of the desert was gracious and beautiful also. Under our feet, and as far eastward as we could see, the ground was like a beach of firm gravel. Never was the desert, even when we were in it fairly and far, so much desert to the imagination as near Cairo, never so glaringly appalling as the yellow Libyan and Arabian wastes that girdled the greenness of the Nile.

When we went, during the Cairo days, to the petrified forest, a few miles from the city in the wilderness, I dreaded the desert, as in the languid and voluptuous embrace of Como, I dreaded the snowy Switzerland that rose severe from its northern extremity. Standing among the petrifactions, they were puerile and tame. I only saw and felt the desert, and no more heeded the sight we came to see than a general, meditating the various chances of the impending battle, heeds the banquet at which he sits.

You have stood upon the sea-shore before you sailed, and imagination, with an eye more glittering than the Ancient Mariner's, fascinated hope and fear with tales more wonderful than his. Friends and foes were daily going to sea, and the ocean was but a thoroughfare between the continents. The horizon was white with sails that canopied men, smoking, and sea-sick, and gaming, and tortured with ennui, and longing for land. The sea was trite. Some mercantile friends even went up the side of the ship, with a hand-bag and an umbrella, to go to England or France, as you had stepped upon a Hudson steamer for an evening at West Point. But for all that, before you sailed, the sea was awful, mysterious and strange as death, although friends die daily, and Sinbad saw nothing which you

might not see, Columbus sought no Cathay that you might not reach.

More mysterious, if possible, than the ocean to the untravelled, is the desert before you mount El Shiraz and MacWhirter. It is a sea of sand to the fancy, a waste of blowing, soft, yellow, glaring sand, utterly soul-consuming, without trees, without water, whereon the bones of men and camels bleach together, and the whirring sand, inexorable as the sea, hides as surely its own devastations. Such in fierce midsummer is the arid heart of Sahara.

But the Arabian desert is a more comely monster, though a monster still. For the death of the desert is more awful than the life of the sea, as silence is more terrible than sound. And, when experience takes the tale from imagination, not less glittering, although different, is its eye, not less fascinating the closes of its strain, and experience, like the mariner, leaves you a sadder and a wiser man.

VI.

THE DESERT BLOSSOMS.

The caravan plodded on. The morning and the silence deepened. The stillness was not tranquillizing, but exciting. My restless eyes roved around the horizon, and presently discovered another train behind us. It advanced more rapidly than our own, and, at length, a grave old man was visible, with a venerable beard and a cheerful countenance, riding upon a white mare. Immediately behind him, two huge palanquins rolled from side to side on the backs of camels.

Was it not plain to see that the lithe figure leaning from the first palanquin to survey the strangers was the beautiful daughter of the grave old man, and that her unveiled face confirmed the suspicion of his dark turban (for Christians may wear no other), that this was no Muslim, but an Armenian caravan?

Did not the Howadji's eyes with warm Christian sympathy contemplate this sister in the faith, mark-

ing the large, luminous eyes, the lustrous fullness of dark hair, and the fair oriental complexion of the Armenian?

Could they fail to note the maidenly condescension to the mysteries of the Muslim toilette in the finger-nails delicately tipped with henna, or could they cynically accuse the treachery of silken sleeves that lightly falling away revealed gorgeous bracelets embracing rosy arms?

The desert suddenly blossomed like the rose. It was an Armenian merchant of Cairo, making the pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the holy week. He ambled toward the commander, who, smoking his chibouque, looked graciously down upon him from the heights of Pomegranate, and, after a prolonged salaam, inquired into our history.

"Two opulent strangers," retorted the commander in the full glory of the golden sleeve; "two great American Moguls going to gladden Jerusalem with their presence."

"*Täib, täib kateir* (good, very good)," gravely replied the Armenian, inclining toward El Shiraz and MacWhirter. "Would it be pleasant to journey together?"

"I will consult the Moguls," said the lofty commander, and he turned to converse with us.

"Do any of them speak English?" anxiously

inquired the Pacha, and the commander repeated the inquiry to the old man.

"*Ah! kooltooluk* (Oh heavens), no," replied the venerable beard; "but Arabic, Coptic, Syriac, a little Persian and Turkish, and madame, the mother of the beautiful daughter, imperfect Italian."

"Well, I don't speak Italian," said the Pacha, "so they may come along."

We moved on. Presently seeing madame, the mother of the beautiful daughter, looking out of the palanquin, and remembering her accomplishments, I ventured an overture, and, looking straight in the daughter's eyes, remarked to the mother—

"*Fa bello oggi, Signora* (It is a pleasant day, Madame)."

"*Si, non capisco, Signore* (Yes, I don't understand, sir)," returned the mother very graciously.

I was rather ashamed of such a morning-call remark to an Armenian lady upon the desert, and felt rebuked by her ignorance of conventional conversation. I tried again.

"*Andate a Gerusalemme anche lei?* (You are also going to Jerusalem?)"

"*Si, non capisco, Signore.*"

And I suspected the Italian was more imperfect than the old man knew.

But the beautiful daughter manifested an extreme

interest in the conversation, and I fear was somewhat amused at the discrepancy between the splendor of the strangers' titles and that of their robes, which were far from royal.

So, in view of the eyes I began again: "*La figlia non parla Italiano?* (The daughter does not speak Italian?)"

"*Si non capisco, Signore,*" came graciously as ever from the maternal lips, and the caravans relapsed into silence.

By three o'clock we began to think of encamping. Travellers complain of the short day's work upon the desert; but surely if you mount MacWhirter at five o'clock in the morning, you will be ready by two or three o'clock to intermit the monotonous jerk of his gait, and stretch yourself upon the carpet over the soft sand. The camp was pitched not far from shore; for so seemed the green land to the west, and the door of our pavilion was arranged to command that of the grave Armenian.

Before sunset two great German Moguls came up, convoyed by a wretched party of Arabs, and a one-eyed dragoman. They had an unhappy air, and stood in the way of the men who were pitching their tents, looking longingly at the palm-trees, and dismally toward the desert, as if the East were an "experience" which they must undergo. And while

they stood there in the sunset, mentally moaning that they must sup without sauer-kraut, and wishing that Goethe had never written the West-Oestlicher-Divan, nor Rückert his Ghazelles, a gay wind blew out of the desert, tossing sand in their faces, and running with low gusty laughter to play with the palms, and to carry back into the wilderness the muezzin's cry.

It fled, and we watched the day gloriously dying. Then suddenly fell over the world the sable folds of the great tent of night: the darkness was cool and sweet, and through myriads of points above, the gone glory of the day looked in and made the darkness gorgeous.

VII.

ROMANCE.

"O GREAT American Mogul, are you awake?" asked I of the Pacha, in the early starlight of the second day.

"I am," he said.

"This is the great Syrian desert—six hundred leagues in length, three hundred in breadth, extending from Aleppo to the Arabian Sea, from Egypt to the Persian Gulf"—

"O great American Mogul," interrupted the Pacha, "are *you* awake?"

"Most certainly I am, and that strip of palm-land which begins to glimmer through the dying night is Egypt, of which a Turkish Pacha said, Egypt is the most beautiful farm, but Syria is a charming country-house."

"Moreover," I continued, "Arab signifies in the original, solitude or desert. And this is the oldest and most estimable of lands"—

"This sand?" inquired the Pacha.

"No; but this East which has mothered us all,

sending out of its apparently sterile womb race after race whose wildness has been tamed into wisdom, and whose genius, early fed with grandeur and simplicity on the luxuriant shores of this river, and in the solitude of the wilderness, has ripened into the art and literature and religion which have made us, and which we cherish."

"Well!"

"Well, Pacha, eschewing the leathery tea which the commander is getting ready, you shall breakfast upon the styles and titles of the prince of this renowned land. You will agree that they become the dignity and character of the realm. They will not seem absurd to you in this tent, although they would seem so in the club and counting-house; and they will impart a fine flavor to your desert reveries. Pacha, perpend; 'I, by the infinite grace of the great, just, and omnipotent Creator, and by the innumerable miracles of the chief of Prophets, Emperor of powerful Emperors, the Refuge of Sovereigns, Distributor of Crowns to the Kings of the Earth, Servant of the thrice sacred cities, (Mecca and Medina,) Governor of the Holy City of Jerusalem, Master of Europe, Asia, and Africa, conquered by our victorious sword and by our terrific lance, Lord of three seas, (White, Black, and Red,) of Damascus the odor of Paradise, of Bagdad, the seat

of the Caliphs, of the fortresses of Belgrade, Agria, and a multitude of countries, islands, straits, nations, generations, and of so many victorious armies which repose beneath the shadow of our Sublime Porte, I—the shadow of God on earth!'"

That is the name of the king of this country, the style of the sultan; and it is as sensible and sonorous as the "Defender of the Faith," applied to the English king, George the Fourth, or "Most Christian King" to the last sovereigns of France.

I like these glittering shreds, and patches, and remnants of magnificence. Despite the gentle Juliet, the melody of the name should accord with the sweetness of the odor, and the name of the sultan ungarnished with these thundering tail-pieces would be as little agreeable as the prefix of "puissant" to our own President. The sultan *is* the Lord of three seas, and of the odor of Paradise, and of the seat of the Caliphs; but what faith did George the Fourth ever defend, except that extraordinary creed of his being the first gentleman in Europe? And what were the shining "Christian" virtues of the Bourbon kings of France?

—While we sat, pleasing fancy with this pompous prelude of the sultan's laws, the sun rose through the morning vapors, like the full red moon. Khadra,

the Armenian's beautiful daughter, stepped into her palanquin. The Germans who had paid specified piastres for the vision of the East, were already sea-sick upon their camels, and were disappearing toward the horizon with their one-eyed keeper; and the venerable-bearded Armenian paced up on his white mare to offer the morning salute to El Shiraz and MacWhirter.

The commander had retired to a little distance, and was purposing to perform the wudoo, or ablution for prayer, sprinkling sand upon his hands, for the Prophet permits sand to be used in a scarcity of water. The father of our Shekh ambled off upon his little donkey alone, over the hard, level desert, as naturally and unconcernedly as a gray-haired mariner in a cock-boat in the midst of the ocean. Hamed drew the halter over his shoulder, and with short quick steps led our caravan once more upon its way.

The sense of freedom and satisfaction in the desert-life, to those who are bred in the harassing details of civilization, has been well sung. Yet in reading books of travel, we take words for things, and forget in the theoretical familiarity with strange experiences, how exciting the experience will be. In my own wanderings, I have observed that the reality always blotted from memory the many pictures

which books had painted there; and the endless volumes of travel which are published, spring, I am sure, not only from the selfish wish to make a book, but from the unselfish desire to communicate impressions which are so vivid in actual experience, that they seem to be entirely new.

Thus I entered Rome in the dusk of an autumn day, and, without having seen any ruin or point of fame, I was awakened by a heavy hunder-shower in the night. As I lay listening to the crashing peals, I could only say, "Rome, Rome," and wondered, in the fury of a fearful burst of the storm, if it had not struck St. Peter's. Then I besought memory to tell me what it knew of St. Peter's, but it only smiled inarticulately, and indicated a sublime architectural vastness. What the details were, what pictures were there, what statues, what statistics of measurement, it did not tell, although it had enjoyed such ample opportunities to know, and my only other consolation of knowledge in that moment, was the conviction that, somewhere in the shadow of St. Peter's, the Miserere was sung during the holy week.

So when I passed down the long gallery of the Vatican, hastening to the Apollo and the Transfiguration, casts and engravings vanished from remembrance, and the charm of the statue and of the pic-

ture was as original as if I had been the first spectator of their beauty.

So, as you mount MacWhirter and follow the boy Hamed into the desert, its breath blows you a welcome, and the same breath disperses the fancies you bring with you. You breathe inspiration and exhilaration. That latent germ of the Asian and Bedoueen which inheres in you, responds to the cool, vast silence, to the Arabian horizon. You are nomadic, you a wanderer, and you must needs dream of a life under the coarse, shapeless, black tents of the Arabs which we are passing, and wonder if Khadra yonder, the large-eyed, olive-skinned Armenian girl, would follow you forever, and willingly share with you in those sandy solitudes, the rice, lentils, butter, and dates, which are the staple food of the Bedoueen.

But as we coast along the green sand, while the warm southerly gale freshens, and enter upon a tract of pure Sahara, over which the dead white light glares and burns, the imagination grows more voluptuous, and you remember that the desert is not all ascetic, but has a strain of splendor in its history, and has seen other sights than solitary trains of camels and a white-bearded old shekh cantering upon a donkey.

Turning your back upon the west and the palms,

and looking eastward, you recall that Arabian historians relate the pious pilgrimage of Haroun El Rashid and Zobeide over the eastern region of this same desert, from Bagdad to Mecca. They performed the journey upon foot, those pious pilgrims, but they were royally attended, and a carpet was unrolled before them as they went, so that the way was but one long pavilion, a gorgeous gallery, cloud-frescoed, sun-goldened, moon-mellowed, and for wall the shining infinitude of the horizon, painted by imagination and peopled by religious faith, at will. At every stage of the progress, a castle was erected, magnificently furnished, and a million and fifty thousand dynars were disbursed in gifts.

This story has the true flavor of the Arabian Nights. But El Fasy, most romantic of historians, strings a rosary of such pearls.

He relates that when the mother of the last of the Abassides made the Mecca pilgrimage, in the year 631 of the Hegira, about 1243 of our era, her caravan numbered not less than one hundred and twenty thousand camels. In the year 97 of the same epoch, a sultan took with him nine hundred camels for his wardrobe alone. Another, long before Haroun El Rashid, spent thirty million dirhems upon the journey, building fine houses at every station, and furnishing them splendidly, erecting mile-stones the

whole way; and, exquisite epicurean, freighted hundreds of camels with snow to cool his sherbet. Haroun El Rashid might no longer reign in imagination as the oriental Epicurus, although he did perform the pilgrimage nine times, should the name of this Sybarite transpire. And his chance is farther threatened by the sultan, who, in 719, carried with him five hundred camels for sweetmeats and confectionary, and two hundred and eighty for pomegranates, almonds, and other fruits. In his travelling larder, also, there were a thousand geese and three thousand fowls.

Indeed, as we stop to lunch, and the commander hands us the bread, cheese, and dates, which are our morning refreshment, we seriously consider whether the romances of the Arabian Nights are not veritable history.

"Or the veritable history a romance of the Arabian Nights," says the cold-blooded Pacha.

As we lunched, we noted the little blue blossoms that grew among the flinty stones, cheering as the odors of land that breathe around the seaman. For we constantly spoke of coasting along the green, and putting out to the desert as voyagers speak of the ocean.

And here, for the first time, you feel the full force of the name, "ship of the desert," applied to the

camel. For not only is he the means of navigation, but his roll is like that of a vessel, and his long, flexible neck like a pliant bowsprit. The resemblance was strengthened and fixed forever by the younger of the unhappy German Moguls, who, with the air of a man who had not slept, and to whom the West-Oestlicher Divan was of small account, went off in the gray dawn, sea-sick upon his camel.

I fear, that to the lambent eyes of Khadra, when lunch was over and we brought our sulky brutes to the ground again, and resumed our way, I, contemplating the scene through blue wire-gauze goggles, was not a purely oriental object. I had no suspicion of it, I confess, until I saw the Pacha bind his around his eyes. But after a single glance at him, I removed my own, and braved the burning sun.

And away we went again, the little Hamed with his quick, short steps, pulling us over the desert.

Away we went again, lost in silence and in dreams.

You are there in Arabia, though they call it the Syrian desert. You shall see Jerusalem, and dimly along the horizon, the crescented minarets of Damascus quiver in the tremulous air of hope. Your dreams of boyhood, your elder hopes were worth the trusting; for this eastern sun daily proves their truth.

And you, friend of mine, while you turn my pages—even now dreaming and hoping as I dreamed and hoped, turning with feverish fingers the pages of others—scorn the scoffer, and believe in the beauty and mystery of the East. The picturesque and nameless charms that haunt your fancy of the Orient, shall be experienced. Here you shall be thrilled with that sense of lofty and primeval freedom which shall throb ever after through the limited life that we must lead.

For the Orson in you, the savage man, the spirit that loves the rock, and the waste, and the boundless horizon, with what we call mere human, sensuous love; the spirit that dwindles cities and their extremest possibility before the grandeur and repose of a wilderness lying in the twilight of tradition—which seizes the manly and noble among young men, and drags them to the mountains and the prairies —that is the spirit, which, like the camel, on the first morning, will raise its head and scent the wild fascination of the desert: which will shout aloud and rejoice in the morning and in the stars—crying *ha-ha* to the desert, as the horse cries to the trumpets.

VIII.

AMONG THE BEDOUEEN.

THE pleasant tales of sultans' pilgrimages are only the mirage of memory.

The poor and pious Muslim, which is not the title of caliphs, when he undertakes a long desert journey, does not carry nine hundred camels for his wardrobe, but he carries his grave-linen with him.

Stricken by fatigue, or privation, or disease, when his companions cannot tarry for his recovery or death, he performs the ablution with sand, and digging a trench in the ground, wraps himself in his grave-clothes, and, covering his body with sand, lies alone in the desert to die, trusting that the wind will complete his burial.

In the Arabs around you, you will mark a kindred sobriety. Their eyes are luminous and lambent, but it is a melancholy light. They do not laugh. They move with easy dignity, and their habitual expression is musing and introverted, as that of men whose minds are stored with the solemn imagery of the desert.

You will understand that your own party of Arabs is not of the genuine desert breed. They are dwellers in cities, not dwellers in tents. They are mongrel, like the population of a sea-port. They pass from Palestine to Egypt with caravans of produce, like coast-traders, and are not pure Bedoueen.

But they do not dishonor their ancestry. When a true Bedoueen passes upon his solitary camel, and with a low-spoken salaam looks abstractedly and incuriously upon the procession of great American Moguls, it is easy to see that his expression is the same as that of the men around you, but intensified by the desert.

Burckhardt says that all orientals, and especially the Arabs, are little sensible of the beauty of nature. But the Bedoueen is mild and peaceable. He seems to you a dreamy savage. There is a softness and languor, almost an effeminacy of impression, the seal of the sun's child. He does not eat flesh—or rarely. He loves the white camel with a passion. He fights for defence, or for necessity; and the children of the Shereefs, or descendants of the Prophet, are sent into the desert to be made heroes. They remain there eight or ten years, rarely visiting their families.

The simple landscape of the desert is the symbol of the Bedoueen's character; and he has little know-

ledge of more than his eye beholds. In some of the interior provinces of China, there is no name for the ocean, and when, in the time of shekh Daheir, a party of Bedoueen came to Acre upon the sea, they asked what was that desert of water.

A Bedoueen, after a foray upon a caravan, discovered among his booty several bags of fine pearls. He thought them dourra, a kind of grain. But as they did not soften in boiling, he was about throwing them disdainfully away, when a Gaza trader offered him a red Tarboosh in exchange, which he delightedly accepted.

Without love of natural scenery, he listens forever to the fascinating romances of the poets; for beautiful expressions naturally clothe the simple and beautiful images he everywhere beholds. The palms, the fountains, the gazelles, the stars, and sun, and moon, the horse, and camel, these are the large illustration and suggestion of his poetry.

Sitting around the evening fire, and watching its flickering with moveless melancholy, his heart thrills at the prowess of El-Gundubah, although he shall never be a hero, and he rejoices when Kattalet-esh-Shugan says to Gundubah, "Come let us marry forthwith," although he shall never behold her beauty, nor tread the stately palaces.

He loves the moon which shows him the way over

the desert that the sun would not let him take by day, and the moon looking into his eyes, sees her own melancholy there. In the pauses of the story by the fire, while the sympathetic spirits of the desert sigh in the rustling wind, he says to his fellow. 'Also in all true poems there should be palm-trees and running water."

For him, in the lonely desert, the best genius of Arabia has carefully recorded upon parchment its romantic visions; for him Haroun El Rashid lived his romantic life; for him the angel spoke to Mohammed in the cave, and God received the Prophet into the seventh heaven.

Some early morning, a cry rings through the group of black square tents. He springs from his dreams of green gardens and flowing waters, and stands sternly against the hostile tribe which has surprised his own. The remorseless morning secretes in desert silence the clash of swords, the ring of musketry, the battle-cry. At sunset the black square tents are gone, the desolation of silence fills the air that was musical with the recited loves of Zul-Himmeh, and the light sand drifts in the evening wind over the corpse of a Bedoueen.

—So the grim genius of the desert touches every stop of romance and of life in you, as you traverse his realm and meditate his children. Yet warm and fas-

cinating as is his breath, it does not warp your loyalty to your native West, and to the time in which you were born. Springing from your hard bed upon the desert, and with wild morning enthusiasm, pushing aside the door of your tent, and stepping out to stand among the stars, you hail the desert and hate the city, and, glancing toward the tent of the Armenian Khadra, you shout aloud to astonish Mac-Whirter,

"I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race."

But as the day draws forward, and you see the same forms and the same life that Abraham saw, and know that Joseph leading Mary into Egypt might pass you to-day, nor be aware of more than a single sunset since he passed before, then you feel that this germ, changeless at home, is only developed elsewhere, that the boundless desert freedom is only a resultless romance.

The sun sets and the camp is pitched. The shadows are grateful to your eye, as the dry air to your lungs.

But as you sit quietly in the tent-door, watching the Armenian camp and the camels, your cheek pales suddenly as you remember Abraham, and that "he sat in the tent-door in the heat of the day." Saving yourself, what of the scene is changed since

then? The desert, the camels, the tents, the turbanned Arabs, they were what Abraham saw when "he lifted up his eyes, and looked, and lo! three men stood by him."

You are contemporary with the eldest history. Your companions are the dusky figures of vaguest tradition. The "long result of time" is not for you.

In that moment you have lost your birthright. You are Ishmael's brother. You have your morning's wish. A child of the desert, not for you are art, and poetry, and science, and the glowing roll of history shrivels away.

The dream passes as the day dies, and to the same stars which heard your morning shout of desert praise, you whisper as you close the tent-door at evening,

"Better fifty years of Europe, than a cycle of Cathay."

IX.

INTO THE DESERT.

It was not until the fourth day from Cairo that we stretched fairly away from the green land into the open desert.

At one point which, like a cape, extended into the sand, we had crossed the cultivation of the Nile-valley, and had rested under the palms—and, O woe! in a treacherous spot of that green way, whether it was angry that we should again return after so fair a start, or whether it was too enamored of Khadra to suffer her to depart, yet, at high noon, in crossing a little stream over which the other camels gallantly passed, the beasts that bore her palanquin tottered and stumbled, then fell mired upon the marge of the stream, and the bulky palanquin, rolling like a foundering ship, gradually subsided into the mud and water, and the fair Armenian was rescued and drawn ashore by her camel-driver.

The Howadji, who were sauntering leisurely behind, perceiving the catastrophe, crossed the stream rapidly, and gaining the spot, poured out

profuse offers of aid and expressions of sympathy, while Khadra looked curiously at them with her large, dreamy eyes, and smiled at the strange sound of their voices.

We halted for a few moments in the wretched little village, and stood out into the desert again in the early afternoon. Pausing at a little canal of Nile water to refill barrels and bottles, the camels were allowed to drink their last draught, until we should reach El Harish.

The desert was a limitless level of smooth, gravelled sand, stretching on all sides among the tufted shrubs, like spacious well-rolled garden-walks. It had the air of a boundless garden carefully kept. "And now," said the Pacha, "begins the true desert.

Farther and farther fell the palms behind us, and at length the green earth was but a vague western belt—a darkish hedge of our garden. Upon the hard sand the camel-paths were faintly indicated, like cattle-paths upon a sandy field. They went straight away to the horizon, and vanished like a railway track.

The sun lay warm upon my back, and with sudden suspicion I turned to look at him, as a child upon an ogre who is gently urging him on. Forward and forward upon those faint, narrow desert

tracks should we pass into the very region of his wrath! Here would he smite us terribly with the splendor of his scorn, and wither and consume these audacious citizens who had come out against him with blue cotton umbrellas!

In that moment, excited as I was by the consciousness of being out of sight of land upon the desert, I laughed a feeble laugh at my own feebleness, and all the tales of exposure and peril in the wilderness that I had ever read returned with direful distinctness, flooding my mind with awe.

As we advanced, the surface of the desert was somewhat broken, and the ridges of sand were enchanted by the sun and shadow into the semblance of rose-hued cliffs, based with cool, green slopes. It was a simple effect but of the extremest beauty; and my heart, moved by the sun's pleasant pictures, deemed him no more an ogre.

—"Do you see the mirage?" asked the Pacha, turning upon El Shiraz, and pointing to a seeming reach of water.

"Yes; but I admit no mirage which is not perfect deception. That's clearly sand."

"True," returned the Pacha; "but yet it is a very good mirage."

We jogged on until we reached it, and found a fair little lake.

'Yes," said the Pacha without turning, "that's clearly sand."

At every tuft of shrub the camels tried to browse, and, sometimes permitting MacWhirter to tarry and dally with the dry green, I fell far behind the caravan, that held its steady way toward the horizon.

Then returned the sense of solitude, and all the more deeply because the sky was of that dark, dense blue—from the contrast with the shining sand—which I had only seen amongst the highest peaks of Switzerland, contrasted with the snow, as on the glacier of the Aar beneath the Finster Aarhorn. In that Arabian day, remembering Switzerland, I lifted my eyes, and seconded by the sun, I saw the drifts of pure sand, like drifts of Alpine snow. The lines and sweeps were as sharp and delicate, and the dark shadows whose play is glorious upon this wide race-course of the winds, made the farther ridges like green hills. Then, because the shrubs pushed up so frequently, the desert was but a cultivated country, overdrifted with sand.

At sunset we reached a solitary palm-grove, an oasis in the waste, and the camp was pitched beneath the trees. The Germans were not far away, but they, like the Cairene merchant, concluded that we were Ingleez Howadji, but, unlike him, did not

expose themselves to our civilities. Strangers are now as little likely to make social overtures to John Bull as he is to receive them.

The palms were shrubby and scant. But the stars were bright among their boughs as we looked from the tent door—and as the Pacha wrapped himself in his capote and lay down to sleep, I asked him what the Prophet said of palms.

In reply the Pacha said disagreeable things of the Prophet. But the learned say, that his favorite fruits were fresh dates and water-melons. Honor, said he, your paternal aunt the date-palm, for she was created of the earth of which Adam was formed. Whoso eateth, said the Prophet, a mouthful of water-melon, God writeth for him a thousand good works and cancelleth a thousand evil works, and raiseth him a thousand degrees, for it came from paradise.

—"Golden Sleeve," said the Pacha, with slumberous vagueness—"water-melons for breakfast."

X.

MIRAGE.

Henry Maundrell having been shut out all night from a shekh's house in Syria, during a pelting rain, revenged himself the next morning by recording that the three great virtues of the Mohammedan religion are a long beard, prayers of the same standard, and a kind of Pharisaical superciliousness.

Our uninvited guest, the shekh's father, possessed those virtues in perfection. Enjoying our escort, eating our food, warming himself at our fire, the testy old gentleman evidently thought that our infidel presences cumbered the earth, and soiled by contact his own Muslim orthodoxy. He was therefore perpetually flinging himself upon his little donkey and shambling toward the horizon, with a sniff of disgust, to air his virtue from further contagion in the pure desert atmosphere. We were as continually overhauling him turned up against a wind-sheltered sand bank, and, in meditative solitude, smoking our choice Latakia.

It was our daily amusement to watch the old Ishmael, whose mind and life were like the desert around us, putting contemptuously away from us upon his tottering donkey, his withered ancles and clumsy shoes dangling along over the sand—away from us, stately travellers upon MacWhirter and El Shiraz, for whom Shakespeare sang, and Plato thought, and Raphael painted, and to whom the old Ishmael's country, its faith, and its history, were but incidents in the luxury of life.

Yet Ishmael maintained the balance well, and never relaxed his sniffing contempt for the Howadji, who, in turn, mused upon the old man, and figured the strange aspect of his mind.

Like a bold bare landscape it must have been, or rather like the skeleton of a landscape. For Ishmael was not true Bedoueen enough to have clothed the naked lines and cliffs of his mind with the verdure of romantic reverie. At evening he did not listen to the droning talk of the other Arabs over the fire, but curled himself up in his blankets, and went to sleep. By day he sought solitude and dozed in his own smoke, and whenever he spoke it was in the querulous tone of soured old age.

His whole life had been a monotonous tale endlessly repeated. From Cairo to Gaza—from Gaza to Cairo. As a boy, tugging the caravan along.

with the halter drawn over his shoulder. As a man, in supreme command, superintending the whole. As a grandsire, cantering away from infidel dogs to smoke their tobacco tranquilly in the sun. Life must have been a mystery to Ishmael could he have ever meditated it, and the existence of a western world, Christians, and civilization, only explained by some vague theory of gratuitous tobacco for the faithful.

As I watched his bright young grandson, Hamed, leading the train, I could not but ruefully reflect that the child is father of the man, and foresee that he would only ripen into an Ishmael, and smoke the ungrown Latakia of Howadji yet unborn.

But through all speculations, and dreams, and jokes, and intermittent conversation—for you are naturally silent upon the desert—your way is still onward over the sand, and Jerusalem and Damascus approach slowly, slowly, two and a half miles an hour.

In the midst of your going, a sense of intense weariness and tedium seizes your soul. Rock, rock —jerk, jerk—upon the camel. You are sick of the thin withered slip of a tail in front, and the gaunt, stiff movement of the shapeless, tawny legs before you, and you vainly turn in your seat for relief from the eyes of Khadra—vainly, for the curtains of

the palanquin are drawn; the warm morning sunlight has been mandragora to her, and she is sleeping.

The horizon is no longer limitless, and of an ocean grandeur. The sluggish path trails through a defile of glaring sand, whose sides just contemptuously obstruct your view, and exasperate you because they are low, and of no fine outline. Switzerland has vanished to-day, and the Arabia that chokes your eye is Arabia Felix no longer. Your brow flushes and your tongue is parched, and leering over the rim of the monotonous defile, fever points at you, mockingly, its long, lank finger, and scornfully, as to a victim not worth the wooing. Suffocated in the thick, hot air, the sun smites you, and its keen arrows dart upward, keener, from the ground. The drear silence, like a voice in nightmare, whispers—"You dared to tempt me;" and with fresh fury of shining, and a more stifling heat, the horrors of the mid-desert encompass you.

But in the midst of your weariness and despair, more alluring than the mirage of cool lakes and green valleys to the eye of the dying Bedoueen, a voice of running waters sings through your memory —the sound of streams gurgling under the village bridge at evening, and the laughter of boys bathing there—yourself a boy, yourself plunging in the

deep, dark coolness—and so, wearied and fevered in the desert of Arabia, you are overflowed by the memory of your youth, and to you, as to Khadra, the sun has been mandragora, and you are sleeping.

You cannot tell how long you sleep and doze. You fancy, when your eyes at length open, that you are more deeply dreaming.

For the pomp of a wintry landscape dazzles your awaking. The sweeps and drifts of the sand-hills among which you are winding, have the sculpturesque grace of snow. They descend in strange corrugations to a long level lake—a reach of water frozen into transparent blue ice, streaked with white sifted snow that has overblown it. The seeming lake is circled with low, melancholy hills. They are bare, like the rock-setting of solitary mountain tarns. The death of wintry silence broods over the whole, but the sky is cloudless, and the sun sits supreme over the miraculous landscape. Vainly you rally your thoughts, and smile at the perfect mirage. Its lines do not melt in your smiles, and the spectacle becomes more solemn in the degree that you are conscious of the delusion. Never, upon its eternal Alpine throne—never, through the brief, brilliant days of New-England December, was winter more evident and entire.

And when you hear behind you, sole sound in

the desert, the shrill tenor of the Armenian's camel-driver, chanting in monotonous refrain songs whose meaning you can only imagine, because Khadra draws aside the curtains to listen, and because you have seen that the tall, swarthy Syrian is enamored of Khadra—then it is not Arabia, nor Switzerland nor New England, but a wintry glade of Laplana, and a solitary singing to his reindeer.

This is not a dream, nor has leering fever touched you with his finger; but it is a mystery of the desert. You have eaten an apple of the Hesperides. For the Bedoueen poets have not alone the shifting cloud-scenery to garnish their romances; but thus, unconsciously to them, the forms of another landscape and of another life than theirs, are marshalled before their eyes, and their minds are touched with the beauty of an unknown experience.

In this variety of aspect, in endless calm, the desert surpasses the sea. It is seldom an unbroken level, and from the quality of its atmosphere, slight objects are magnified, and a range of mounds will often masque as a group of goodly hills. Even in the most interrupted reaches, the horizon is rarely a firm line, but the mirage breaks it, so that the edge of the landscape is always quivering and uncer'ain.

Pleasant, after the wild romance of such a desert day—romance, which the sun in setting closes—to reach the camping-ground, to gurgle in MacWhirter's ear with the guttural harshness that he understands as the welcome signal of rest, and to feel him, not without a growl of ill-humor, quaking and rolling beneath you, and finally, with a half-sudden start, sinking to the ground.

You tie his bent fore-knee together, with the halter which goes around his head; and you turn to see that the tent is not spread over stones, which would not stuff your pillow softly. Then, returning, you observe that MacWhirter with his fore-leg still bent and bound to his head, is limping upon the three serviceable legs to browse upon chance shrubs, and to assert his total independence of you, and contempt of your precautions.

Meanwhile, Khadra steps out of her palanquin, and while her father's camp is pitched, she shakes out the silken fullness of her shintyan, and strolls off upon the desert. The old Armenian slips the pad from the back of his white mare, for he does not ride in a saddle, and stands in everybody's way, in his long, blue broadcloth kaftan, taking huge pinches of snuff.

The commander, relieved of his arsenal, bustles among our Arabs, swearing at them lustily when-

ever he approaches the Howadji, apparently convinced that everything is going well, so long as he makes noise enough.

"Therein not peculiar," murmurs the Pacha, rolled up in his huge woollen capote, and smoking a contemplative chibouque.

The tents are pitched, the smoke curls to the sky, and the howling wilderness is tamed by the domestic preparations of getting tea.

The sun also is tamed, our great romancer, our fervent poet, our glorious painter, who has made the day a poem and a picture; who has peopled memory with sweet and sad imagery; who, like Jesus, brought a sword, yet like him, has given us rest. He, too, is tamed, and his fervor is failing. Yet as he retires through the splendor of the vapory architecture of his pavilion in the West, he looks at us once more, like a king from his palace windows.

XI.

UNDER THE SYRIAN STARS.

So glides away the slow caravan of desert days.

But when they have passed over the western horizon, out of the east come the soft-footed evening hours. The camels are tethered, the Arabs crone over the fire, one bursts into a wailing minor song. The night swallows the sound. and only the stars shine.

And even as you might vaguely discern the sheen of Persian silks, and scent the odor of rare fruits in a caravan from Bagdad, passing your camp in the moonlight, so through the twilight of reverie pass the stately forms of noble thoughts, and the night is perfumed with hopes that love the future.

—Like a night of meditation after a busy day, is the desert journey after our busy life.

And still, as in midnight musings, wherever you may be, your whole individual experience lies before you like a transparent lake, into which you look and see the coral and pearl of your childhood lying unchanged at the bottom, and above them,

like gold fish that gleam and go, the restless ambitions of your youth—and floating upon the surface, the chips and weeds and fading flowers, like the chances of your present life—even so do they recur to you in your desert separation from your ordinary career, and there you can measure them and compare.

Under the Syrian stars, measuring, without the struggle of contact, the purposes of life, you renew your vows to the truth which life forgets; and dedicate anew to the unknown God, the altar of your heart that was sadly overgrown.

That, be sure, is "the improvement" of this long sermon in the wilderness. That is its permanent use to you as a man, however its picturesque and resplendent illustrations may have pleased you as a scholar and a poet. At that distance from the Babylons in which your life is led, and in which the building of Babels goes on so zealously, you can better estimate the aims and rewards and *cordons bleus*, promised by the builders to all diligent workmen.

Under the Syrian stars you can touch the earth again and renew your strength.

Knowing that the reputations and the *cordons bleus* are not awarded to the sincere, but to the successful, are you ready to serve the veiled goddess—the inscrutable Isis—and let success go?

But if it is hard to say so here, where the shackles of custom are loosened—hard, although your whole heart should cry within you, as Hamlet's father, from the ground, "swear!"—yet how much harder will it be when these stars have set to you forever, and you are again confronted with our immitigable Mammon.

We love success, but who are the successful?

Cresus, or Plato, or Napoleon?

For though a man should heap up millions, if he cannot use it—if it go foolishly, and the world is not alleviated—if he be his own pander and not God's almoner, then money is but a cumbrous armor, which he has rivetted upon his limbs and which prevents his fighting.

Success is something more, I dream in the desert, than gratified vanity or the applause of toadies and zanies.

It is sad to see the poets shrink before the so-called practical men, because it is an image of the triumph of sense and of material things. I do not quarrel with the violet that it is not a rose. That a man has no love of letters, or of science, or of art, is no reproach to him; it is a misfortune. But that he regards those who have those loves as unwise, dreamy and inpracticable men, is the mole's complaint of the eagle. Tasso skulked about the garden

of the villa d'Este, reproved by the sharp common sense of the Duke. But if you rebuke Tasso for skulking, do not forget that it was only the awk wardness of a young nobleman before his exact and accomplished valet—as I remember seeing a gentleman unused to clubs, confused in a London Club House, by the bland assurance of the smooth flunkey at the door.

—Who, then, are the successful?

Was Shakespeare successful because he was the greatest of poets, and sowed those twilight groves of meditation in which all men love to walk? I fear no more than the gardener, who is putting in young saplings to-day, under which, in a century, his descendents shall play.

—Or Michael Angelo? But history shows no sadder man. Or Beethoven, or Mozart, or the last new poet whom the papers praise?

Once more remember the city to which you are going. Was he who entered it amid hosannas and under waving palm boughs, successful? Who shall dare to say? This much, at least, is clear, that none of these achieved what would be called success, in any of the Babylons in which we live, not in London or Paris, not in Vienna or New York.

Success is a delusion. It is an attainment—but who attains? It is the horizon always bounding

our path, and therefore never gained. The pope, triple-crowned, and borne, with flabella, through St. Peter's, is not successful; for he might be canonized into a saint. Pygmalion, before his perfect statue, is not successful; for it might live. Raphael, finishing the Sistine Madonna, is not successful, for her beauty has revealed to him a fairer and an unattainable beauty. The merchant is not successful, for there is no end to making money; nor the last new poet—because, if he be a poet, he knows that he cannot write the music of the spheres.

Life, say the wise and the elders, grows sadder and sadder, and age strips it of delusions as autumn winds strip the trees. Sir Horace Walpole, the artificial man of an artificial age, who had been fortunate, as few men are, said in his decline: "Life is a comedy to those who think, and a tragedy to those who feel;" and again, more bitterly: "Life is a farce, and its last scene should not be mournful." As if no man could live and occupy his just place in men's regards, Lord Bacon says: "Death hath this also, that it openeth the gate to good fame and extinguisheth envy." And, although admitting that a man may obtain "worthy ends and expectations"—he adds, with alluring music: "But, above all, believe it, the sweetest canticle is *Nunc dimittis*."

From Solomon to the last book I read, the refrain is the same: "Vanity of vanities," says he, and my author echoes—"Like all lives this is a tragedy; high hopes, noble efforts; under thickening difficulties and impediments; ever new nobleness of valiant effort, and the result, death, with conquests by no means corresponding."

The night-wind howls mockingly into the desert, "Success, success!"—and its echo in your heart is that sad story of Sir Joshua Reynolds. When an old man, he was standing one day before one of his early pictures, lost in pensive thought: "I was thinking," said he, "of the promise of this picture, which I can never fulfill!"

As you draw the tent-curtain and shut out the stars, you will swear by them to honor no more than is honorable, the practical talent that rules the world; and for the motto of your dreams, you will choose the wise old Chinese proverb: "The world's nonsense is the sense of God."

XII.

A TRUCE.

THE faithful reader who has clung with me to MacWhirter up to this chapter, may, if he will, regard the eleventh whence he has just emerged as an evening vapor rolling over the desert, and settling for awhile upon our camp.

But, as it disperses, and the day breaks, and we are about to mount again, I say to him that the record of a desert journey must needs be more of sensation than of sight. With ink and types, which allow no perspective, no light, and shade, and color, only the pictures can be painted to which such means are competent. Therefore, how can the traveller most vividly figure to the reader who is not a student of some especial point, the regions of which he tells.

Statistics hardly suffice. The golden ball of St. Peter's is four hundred and ninety-four feet from the pavement. But that statement, even supported by the fact that the breadth of the façade is more than four hundred feet, does not leave St. Peter's a per-

manent figure in the mind. Nor does the ingenious combination with those truths of the consideration that the great nave is fretted with gold, and that the four huge piers which support the dome are faced with marble, and that the baldacchino or canopy over the high altar is of bronze, stripped by a pope from the Pantheon, impress the mind with what it wishes to know of St. Peter's.

But the impression of all this wonderful architectural combination, and the associations which wreathe it, in a judicious and sensitive mind, with invisible ornaments of an unknown grace, if accurately reproduced by the pen, shall build St. Peter's again, and found it deep in your mind forever.

Is it not strange, even allowing all that I have previously claimed for travellers who tell their travels, that their books are so cold and spectral?

Before and after I went to the East, I read the numberless volumes that record the many eastern tours of learned and poetic men. But the most, either despairing of imparting the true oriental flavor to their works, thinking, perhaps, that eastern enthusiasm must needs exhale in the record, as the Neapolitans declare that the *Lachrymæ Christi* can have the genuine flavor only in the very Vesuvian vineyard where it grows—or hugging some forlorn hope that the reader's imagination will warm the

dry bones of detail into life—most of the travellers write their books as bailiffs take an inventory of attached furniture.—Item. One great pyramid, four hundred and ninety-eight feet high.—Item. One tomb in a rock, with two bushels of mummy dust. —Item. Two hundred and fifty miles over a desert.—Item. One grotto at Bethlehem, and contents—to wit: ten golden lamps, twelve silver ditto, twenty yards of tapestry, and a marble pavement. And with this ghostly dance of death shaken before our eyes, we are invited to contemplate the gorgeous pageant of oriental life.

The reader, surely, will not suspect me of slighting the claims of exact knowledge. Scientific research embodies its results in concise and colorless pages. Its aim is to state a fact, not to impart an impression. The latter, however, is the object of a general book of travels, and the facts must yield only their juice and their aroma to the traveller, if he would share his pleasure with others. Guide-books are not absorbingly interesting, and give small idea of the countries they describe. Guide-books are indispensable to the traveller, but they are surely not the standard of his own account of the objects of which they give him the locality.

Look at Lewis's Egyptian pictures, even at Horace Vernet's ideally conventional paintings of

eastern life, and revelling in the luxury of their color and form, consider what books men have written of these things. Reflect, that if Lewis and Vernet were using the means of Titian and Claude, the book-writers professed to use those of Shakespeare and Shelley. The Arabian Nights and Hafiz are more valuable for their practical communication of the spirit and splendor of oriental life, than all the books of eastern travel ever written, of which, for the general reader, Eothen is certainly the best, being brilliant, picturesque, humorous, and poetic. Yet Eothen is still a cockney—never puts off the Englishman, and is suspicious of his own enthusiasm, which, therefore, sounds a little exaggerated.

—The caravan is not yet out of sight, gracious reader, we shall overtake it at a bound when we will; let MacWhirter, therefore, browse, while I hold you here a moment longer.

It confirms the tenor of our thought in this chapter, that the most satisfactory impressions of places we have never seen are derived from poetry. I would also say, in some cases, from music; for I know no song, no book, no picture, so utterly and exquisitely Venetian, as the *Gondola-lied* of Mendelssohn. If the listener truly hear that, he knows what Venice truly is.

In Rome you find yourself repeating Byron and

Goethe's hexameters, then, when you most feel Rome, and in Venice it is Byron again, and the unmetred poetry of Beckford, whose lines recur. It is not, I believe, so much because they treat of the objects you are seeing, as because they seem to you the natural, the poetic, and therefore, most profound, suggestions of the character of the place. And in the same way, as you advance through the Syrian summer, the fragrant and voluptuous imagery of Solomon's song is the most felicitous expression of your experience there.

The reason of this is, surely, that the permanent interest of various lands is intellectual. We like them for what they are to us, rather than for what they are in themselves. Yet we cannot know what they are, nor assimilate them to our own advantage, unless we are steeped in their spirit. We must be Egyptian, Syrian, Greek, Roman, or we shall never know what Egypt, Syria, Greece, and Rome mean.

Hence arises the abiding charm of books of travel, which are faithful records of individual experience, under the condition, always, that the individual has something characteristic and dramatic in his organization; that he is heroic in adventure, or of graceful and accurate cultivation—the fundamental condition being, of course, that there is a sympathy between the nature of the man and the country he visits.

Aubrey de Vere's Picturesque Sketches of Greece and Turkey, and Alexander Henry's Adventures in Canada, are models of the heroic and the scholarly books of travel. And, as the view taken by a humorous genius of subjects with which it has little sympathy, are genuinely comic and therefore valuable, Dickens' Pictures from Italy is a very entertaining book.

—MacWhirter is disappearing; but I have one more word.

Akin to what we are saying, and indirectly illustrating its truth, is the fact that we learn more of what we wish to know of past times, namely, of the aspect of their life and character, from the romance of history than from history itself.

The man who knew no more of English history than Shakespeare had taught him, was not ignorant. Scott, in Kenilworth and the Talisman, makes us free not only of the courts of Elizabeth and of the lion-hearted Richard, but of their times as well. And with us, Hawthorne has made appreciable in most living reality the Puritan spirit and form of early New England, as Irving, in his Knickerbocker and Hudson stories, makes the reader a burgher of New Amsterdam.

These men, these poets, are but travellers into the dusky realms of the past, whom the genius of

the past graciously receives and authorizes to speak for him.

—MacWhirter is fairly out of sight!

Such, heroic reader—of this kind, must be your story of the desert, if you hope that those distant friends will see what you are seeing. If you think otherwise, let us here courteously part company, and you shall retire in goodly society.

John Carnes, Esq., and Lord Castlereagh, and Volney—Ali Bey, and Richardson, and Clarke, and W. G. Browne, that "model for travellers," and a Xerxes-host of quartos, octavos, and duodecimos, will tell you all that you will not find upon our pages. They have done their work too well to have left any necessity of our doing the same. The sights of this journey they have fully, and accurately, and learnedly described.

But we, the latest of them all, grateful for the services they have rendered, and for the convenience which they prove to us, have yet something to say which they had not, and that is, our own impression of what they saw.

XIII.

OASIS.

THERE came suddenly a strip of green land.

It was like a branch of flowers yet fresh, drifting out to a ship at sea. The birds sang clearly in the early morning, high over our heads flashing in the bright air. The damp sand was delicately printed with the tracks of birds. The desert lay around us in low hillocks, like the long billows of a retiring ocean. The air blew fresh and sweet from the west. Fresh and sweet, for it was the breath of the Mediterranean.

And suddenly we came upon green land.

The country was like a rolling pasture. Grass and dandelions, and a myriad familiar wild flowers lay, wreaths of welcome, at our feet. There were clumps of palms and single acacias. The cactus, also, that we call Indian fig, shapeless, prickly, but full of the sun and fat with promise.

The wind blew, the birds sang, the trees waved. They were the outposts of life, whence it nodded and beckoned to us, and threw us flowers as we emerged from the death of the desert.

It was a dream in beauty and in fleetness. Mac-Whirter—incarnate common-sense—bore us straight through the dream into the desert again.

They receded, they sank into vapory distance, those beautiful forms—the waving trees, the singing birds. Yet they were Palestine, they the symbols of the Holy Land. Promises and hopes, they sing and wave upon the ending desert, and I greeted them as the mariner in that ship at sea greets the south and romantic Spain, in the bough of blossoms floating by him.

The strip of green land passed, and we entered upon pure Sahara. It was the softest, most powdery sand; tossed by light winds it drew sharp angles, glittering white angles, against the dense blue. The last trace of green vanished as we passed deeper among the ridges. The world was a chaotic ocean of sparkling white sand.

The desert was, in that moment, utter and hopeless desert, but was never desert again. Bare, and still, and bright, it was soft beyond expression, in the fitful game of shadows played upon it by the sun—for vapors were gathering overhead.

Suddenly, around one of the sharp angles—and I could not, until then, tell if it were near or far—suddenly a band of armed Arabs came riding towards us. They curvetted, and dashed, and cara-

coled upon spirited horses, leaping, and running, and prancing round imperturbable MacWhirter and El Shiraz, who plodded sublimely on. The Arabs came close to us, and greeted our men with endless kissings and salaams. They chatted and called aloud; their weapons flashed and rattled, their robes flowed in the wind—then, suddenly, like a cloud of birds, they wheeled from us—

"Tirra, lirra! tirra, lirra!
Sang Sir Lancelot!"

and away they sped over the horizon.

We plodded on. The eyes of Khadra smiled delight at the glittering party as it disappeared. The Armenian's little white mare paced toilingly through the loose sand. It was high noon, and, advancing silently, we passed over the near horizon of the ridges, and came upon a plain of hard sand. Not far away lay a town of white stone houses, and the square walls of a fort—and beyond them all, the lustrous line of the sea.

It was el Harish, on the edge of the desert. The boys and girls ran out and surrounded us with staring curiosity. Some were running horses, some passed on little donkeys, and others were unloading camels. Then came a swarthy-faced official in tattered garments. He demanded our passports, and

to him, inly lamenting that "the shadow of God upon earth" had dwindled to such as this, we delivered them.

Under the crescent moon the camp was pitched. And under the crescent moon all Arabia was but a sea-beach. For unmitigated sand lay from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates.

The curious children flocked out of the town, and watched, with profound attention, the ceremonies of infidel tea-making, and the dinner of unbelievers. The muezzin called from the minaret, and the children left us to the sky, and the sand, and the sea.

The Mediterranean called to us through the darkness. The moonlight was so vague that the sea and the desert were blent. The world was sunk in mysterious haze. We were encamped, it seemed on the very horizon, and looked off into blank space.

After the long silence of the desert, it was strange to hear the voice of the sea. It was Homer's sea, the only sea of romance and fame; over which Helen sailed and the Argonauts—out of which sailed Columbus. It was St. John's sea and Alexander's —Hadrian's and the Crusaders'. Upon its shore stood Carthage, and across its calm the Syrens sang.

These fames and figures passed. But the poet's words remain;

"I love all waste
And solitary places, where we taste
The pleasure of believing what we see
Is boundless, as we wish our souls to be."

XIV.

MISHAP.

We had crossed the desert. We had reached, once more, permanent human habitations, although we were yet far from cultivated land. There was no longer any especial danger of dying of thirst, or of suffocation in the fiery breath of the wilderness.

The sun rose over el Harish, in a white mist. The wind blew steadily and warm, and it was a sultry day. To the west lay the sea, like a band of dense blue vapor; between the sea and the sky, into the east, as far as we could see, went the desert.

The old shekh mounted his donkey and gallopped away toward the town. We saw him no more. But I have no doubt his supply of tobacco from our stores was trebly abundant that morning; and I fancy him still praying and smoking in the mosque of el Harish; for I doubt if prayers of lesser length could have entirely purified him from our infidel infection. Hamed, too, left us—the sturdy, bright-

eyed boy who had walked across the desert tugging the caravan after him. We were all sorry to part with him; but I was grieved that he did not seem sorry to go.

The Armenian was detained by some difficulty with his camel-driver; and the German Moguls had preceded us. Our camels had gone for water, and it was late in the morning when we lost sight of the sea, and left el Harish. The country was a boundless, barren, rolling prairie, studded at intervals with bright blue, yellow, and white field flowers. Our way lay through a broad, shallow valley—a wadee or water-course. The low hills on the side swere sandy and shrub-tufted, and in spots, scanty patches of grain trembled in the wind.

Suddenly another group of horsemen, imposing in numbers, and rattling and flashing, dashed forward from the horizon on the full run, and wheeled, and danced around us, so that we summoned the commander to explain.

He answered, with great importance, that a Pacha of very remarkable tails was just in the rear, with his hareem and attendants; and that he was journeying from Damascus to Cairo, being no less a personage than the collector of revenues for "the Shadow of God on Earth," from the Pachalics of Syria and Egypt.

While we spoke, the caravan appeared. The Pacha sat in state in a palanquin, borne between two camels, and surrounded by a brilliant crowd of armed retainers. Several scores of camels followed him, bearing his wives, slaves, and luggage, and a body of soldiers closed the rear. It was a handsome pageant and passed on.

We paused to lunch, and in the azure distance of noon, a group of gazelles leaped and ran. Only the delicate grace of their play was outlined upon the sky. It was soothing as a lullaby of lutes, and as I lay in the warm noon, dozing and musing, I dreamed that the large eyes of the Armenian girl were looking down upon me from a glowing bower upon a rugged, yellow mountain peak,—and lo! the beautiful Khadra passing upon her camel.

The commander tarried behind, when we mounted, and we were swaying along drowsily, as becalmed ships swing upon tropical seas—I, for my part, seeing wonderful visions in the moonlight of Khadra's eyes—when suddenly I heard a half cry, and the steady thump of heavy motion.

Turning immediately, I beheld the golden-sleeved commander approaching, all too speedily for his dignity and safety. He had fallen far behind, and his camel, Pomegranate, perceived upon starting, that the caravan was vanishing before him, and that

only a hasty flight would bring him again among his peers. Thereupon, just as the adipose commander, after lunching, was duly settling himself into his seat, and had begun somnolently to smoke, Pomegranate shook the halter from his head by an ingenious movement, and set forward upon the full trot, with a total disregard of Mohammed's digestive functions.

He, as if an earthquake heaved the mountain upon which his city of refuge was builded, dropped his chibouque and clutched at the saddle, moaning and crying aloud for succor. But the implacable and complacent Pomegranate, solely intent upon joining his fellows, jogged horribly on. I saw the unhappy commander caged in his arsenal, that rattled mockingly around him, violently shaking, and with a piteous look of despair upon his face, which betrayed his consciousness of helplessness, and that he, the arsenal, and all the trappings, were slowly slipping off toward the tail.

"O gentlemen!" he gasped in irregular syllables, as Pomegranate inexorably advanced.

"Stop him, Mohammed!" cried the Pacha.

"Oh—damn!—*non è possibile*," shook out the Muslim Pickwick, as he clattered up in the rear.

Pomegranate, intent upon revenging in Mohammed's person all that camels have ever suffered

from men, would not stop as he reached us, but pushed sternly on.

"Oh! gentlemen," groaned Golden Sleeve, as he slowly and inevitably slid toward the tail of his beast.

But the gentlemen were faint with laughter, and the delicious eyes of Khadra swam with delight at the spectacle.

The crisis came. Weeping bitterly and grasping at the carpets upon which he sat, and which were slipping with him, down upon the desert he sank, a promiscuous heap of man, weapons, cloaks, carpets, water-bottles, and blankets, and there he sat with legs outstretched, the toes of his red slippers curved up at the sky, and wofully staring back upon the Howadji and the Armenians, who, ready to fall from their own camels with excess of laughter, hurried to the rescue.

We came up, and the commander did not move. He sat upon the ground pouring out terrific Arabic oaths, yet more in sorrow than in anger. For with the air of a man irretrievably injured, and not deigning us a solitary glance, he piled Pomegranate again with carpets, and went forward once more with melancholy resignation, to the other vicissitudes of life.

XV.

ADVENTURE.

My reader is not heroic, perhaps, and has not clung to MacWhirter, but is listlessly turning these pages to strike upon the story of adventures, even as the news-boy in the pit of the Chatham falls asleep at the opening of the play in which Mr. Kirby performs, but with the strictest injunction to his companion to be awakened at the crisis in the fifth act—"Because I want to see him die; for Billy Kirby dies prime."

What is a desert journey without adventures? And what does the arsenal that envelopes the commander imply?

Often we seemed to be on the verge of adventure. At certain spots, when evening fell, and the camp was pitched, the sage commander scanned the desert suspiciously, and looked solemnly at the Howadji, whispering with many shrugs, that this especial spot was a haunt for "*bad people!*" And as, uniformly, after such intimations, and after dark, a group of men appeared and offered to mount guard

over us all night, for a consideration, it became clear, from the result, that it was only a simple conspiracy to extort money.

On such occasions our shekh was summoned and informed in council that we had contracted that he should pay all tolls; that for our own parts we wished no guard, and should certainly pay for none, and that if any ill-advised Bedoueen undertook to compel payment, the consequences (and here the Pacha clicked the lock of the one-barrel, and I handled my pistols abstractedly) were not upon our consciences.

This affable treatment of prospective danger was always successful. The danger remained prospective. There was a larger group about the fire those nights, and in the morning the Howadji were told, as if to awaken remorse, that after guarding us all night, the men had retired, after the shekh had paid them—and in a vague tone, like an appendix, it was remarked, that the shekh had no superfluous funds for such purposes. The obdurate Howadji always smiled and answered that they were glad the shekh had so dutifully fulfilled his contract.

It is impossible, however, not to feel upon the desert that you are completely at the mercy of the Arabs. The feeling does not rise into apprehension, because, like animals, they do not fully comprehend

the fact themselves, and because their ignorance of possible consequences makes those consequences more appalling to their fancy. They are, too, naturally peaceable.

Yet as a man who had been always protected by law, whose life was never fairly committed to his own keeping, I wondered, with some desire, whether we were not to have an adventure. As every man for the first time going to sea, hopes for a storm, as if otherwise, he could not know the true majesty of the ocean, so, abandoned to the desert, I half wished to make the sense of that abandonment real, by the wild lawlessness of a skirmish.

I say half-wished, because, however strong may be your spirit of adventure, if you are not a savage or a brute, the chances of killing or being killed, to gratify a whim, are not fascinating. Seen on the pages of books by warm fires, a cloud of dust on the horizon, and the ringing bound of armed men seeking to do battle with yourself and your party, are agreeable and exciting.

And I found in Cairo, at Shepherd's dinner-table, bands of brave gentlemen on their way from the interior of English counting-houses to similar retreats in India, who regretted extremely that time did not permit them "to run into the desert and have a crack at the Arabs."

I was sorry for them, but have since been comforted by hearing that brave men have always time and chance for bravery.

The genuine excitement of danger, and the heroic impatience of social conventions that tend to personal effeminacy are very intelligible, and I know the exulting leap of the heart with which a man steps beyond the charmed circle of legal protection, and relying upon his own right arm, longs

> "To drink delight of battle with his peers."

But desert fighting is, at best, only shooting robbers. Your tent is a chamber, and the marauding Arab a burglar, and you shoot him simply that he may not shoot you, or steal your purse. The Pacha, indeed, indulged a laudable curiosity—laudable as an item of mental experience—to know "how it would seem" to shoot a man.

I suppose that is the extent of the wish for adventure in prosecuting the desert journey. For the first time in your life—if you have escaped highway robbery—you find yourself in circumstances that may very easily and naturally compel you to the act, and the moment such a thing becomes possible or even probable, the speculation ripens into desire, and you scan the horizon impa-

tiently for the cloud of dust, and the onslaught of murderous Arabs.

The reality would sadly chill the romance. To encounter an enemy in the lonely mid-desert, an enemy whose force would be in numbers, with whom the excitement of fighting would be only the despair of a cornered tiger—whom you could not feel to be the "peers" with whom battle of any kind is a delight, but beasts only, and serpents, and dumb forms of fate; and in the end to leave your bones to bleach on the lonely mid-desert—how does that look on the pages of books by warm fires? It is an unmitigated tragedy.

Tragical enough, and in the same kind, was the fate of the young English and French officers who perished in our early Indian wars. They fell without the glorious consciousness of equal foes. Yet even these men, although bereaved of the glory of honorable battle, snared and circumvented by savages, fought for their country, and their country remembers them.

The aspects of a desert combat thus sweep over your mind, as you meditate them upon MacWhirter. But on the whole, you wish you might try it. For, after all, how many of the Syrian travellers who have fought, were injured? Yet many of

them knew until their last day, "how it seems" to shoot a man.

Besides, it is not very serious business. Many a desert camp of Howadji has been startled by the shrill cry of "Bedoueen, Bedoueen," and springing up amid the darkness and confusion, and popping and flashing of guns and pistols, there was all the dismay of a surprised army, with vague, bitter thoughts of home and of vultures nibbling carrion upon the sands, and all the panorama of past joys and future woe was revealed by one such moment, as all the east and west by a lightning flash at midnight. But the fierce tumult died away into some stealthy old fellow trying to steal a chicken.

These things you remember, and wish the Arabs would ride up. You are vexed to pass unscathed across the wilderness, when Perkyn Pastor and his friend were besieged by Bedoueen in a tomb at Petra for a whole day, blazing away at them from the barricaded door, and with only a barrel of porter for rations. Pastor is a man who has had experiences—you reflect, with chagrin. Pastor can thrill any civilized saloon by commencing carelessly, "When I was besieged by Bedoueen, in a tomb at Petra—"

What have you to say for yourself, you eventless Howadji, whose only adventure up to this moment

is ignominiously tumbling off MacWhirter at the instant of starting?

—Softly, softly, good my friends!—when I saw the seven Arabs with spears and matchlocks coming slowly toward us.—

—What! have you had adventures? Come, Dick, wake up! Billy Kirby's going to die!

XVI.

ARMA VIRUMQUE CANO.

THE next morning the venerable Armenian halted in a grove of palms, and waited until we came up. We found a strange man in fierce altercation with him.

"He insists upon having the camel," said the Armenian.

It was a grim Bedoueen, and he clung to the halter of the disputed beast with inexorable tenacity.

"By what right?" inquired the Howadji.

"He says he sold it, eight years ago, to the Armenian's shekh, for six hundred piastres, and not a para has yet been paid, so he will take the camel," explained Golden Sleeve, between his morning whiffs.

"And this was the reason the shekh would not come farther than el Harish?"

"Probably, gentlemen."

"Well?"

"Well, he must not take him," said the commander, with the air of the "Lord of three seas."

The old Armenian was evidently sadly perplexed. He rode up and down on his docile little white mare, and shot off volleys of mild oaths at the grim Bedoueen, with the air of a city merchant stopped on the road with his family, who deems it incum bent upon him to be brave and chivalrous, but who would be very sorry to provoke unpleasant consequences.

"Oh! *kooltooluk!* (oh! thunder!) let the camel go!" said he, from a little distance, to the Bedoueen; "we can't stop here."

The grim Bedoueen grasped the halter more firmly, and broke out into shrill objurgations and threats.

Khadra looked placidly out of her nest, as if life and its chances were but a play, to be enjoyed from a palanquin.

I turned MacWhirter toward the mother, and suggested very slowly and distinctly, "*Mi rincresce molto, Signora,*" (I am very sorry for all this, madam.)

"*Si, non capisco, Signore,*" (yes, sir, I don't understand,) blandly retorted the lady—and I turned MacWhirter back again.

There was a tumultuous quarrel after this, during which I rode forward and awaited the result. The caravan presently followed, and the Pacha told me

that the Bedoueen had retired into the desert, announcing his intention of returning with seven other devils worse than himself, and of capturing the camel, if necessary, by force of arms.

By force of arms? Here was "worshipful intelligence." Here was the gauntlet deliberately thrown down by the "wild tribes of the desert."

By force of arms? And I reflected with excusable pride upon following Perkyn Pastor's Petra romance with another, commencing—"Yes, and when the Arabs came down upon us near El Harish." I kindled with the thought. Stale seemed the life of cities—

"O give me but my Arab steed,"

sang I. The boundless desert, and combat hand to hand. Ho! St. George for merrie England! shouted I, battering MacWhirter's neck with my cane.

"What's the matter?" asked the Pacha.

"In what order shall we give battle?" replied I.

"What battle?" said the exasperated Pacha.

—Sure enough, what battle?

The Howadji plodded on silently. At length Mohammed came up and asked—

"What will the gentlemen do?"

"Give instant battle," replied I, battering MacWhirter's neck with renewed vigor.

The Pacha had no words for me; but he inquired of the commander if the Arab would return.

"Most certainly," he replied.

"How soon?"

"Within an hour and a half"

'What will he do?"

"He and his friends will try to take the camel."

"Will the old gentleman resist?"

"Yes."

"Will there be a fight?"

"Probably."

The Howadji held a council, and agreed, that as allies of the venerable Armenian and of his beautiful daughter, they were bound in honor to maintain his cause.

But it was perfectly clear that he was in the wrong. He had been deceived, certainly, but we learn that he did not doubt the justice of the Arab's claim, and happily being beyond civilized lands and legal conventions, there was no pretence that persistence in wrong-doing "outlawed" justice and common sense. There was no casuist or doctor of civil law at hand, to show that as the camel-driver had retained the beast, and had enjoyed the use and profit of it for eight years, that, therefore, he had established his right to it, and that the Arab might retire over the desert, whistling.

Right or wrong, however, the Bedoueen was about appealing to the primeval law of force—the only law of property recognized by the great captains of all ages. And, right or wrong, we were involved in the scrape.

"Adventure" had descended upon us in an ignominious aspect. Any Arab fighting was unsatisfactory enough, viewed in respect of glory. But to fight with a few miserable men, who simply insisted upon a right; to bring all the modern improvements of the science of gunnery to bear upon these poor wretches—truly, from him who hath not, thought I, shall be taken even that which he hath.

But I viewed it again. There was plenty of time, advancing upon MacWhirter two-and-a-half miles an hour, to contemplate it in every aspect.

Here, Pacha, we shall be put to proof. Let us hail this fortunate opportunity of discovering if we be heroes or not. How should we ever ascertain in New York or Boston? This day shall teach us a noble pride or a wise humility. Here we are tried as men, not as citizens. I have no doubt you will this day ascertain "how it seems" to shoot a man.

The time came to fall into line. We sent to inform our ally that we should not fail him in this perilous juncture. He insisted upon preceding the two caravans upon his white mare, and called for

his gun, which he brandished in a manner of no hopeful auspice for the Howadji.

The rest of us were distributed at fair distances through the line. I looked with curiosity at the commander, to see him extricating swords from scabbards and leather cases, and putting himself into an impregnable state of defence. But no muscle or weapon moved. Golden Sleeve evidently relied upon the moral force of his arsenal. Taking the hint, I brought my two pocket pistols to the front, and then remembered that my box of caps was in the commander's keeping, and my bullets at the bottom of the portmanteau. But I bated no jot of heart; for I remembered Hannibal at Thrasimene and Napoleon everywhere.

I stole a glance at Khadra. She was looking from her palanquin, her eyes dreamily roving along the horizon, and by a sudden flash that lightened through them I knew the cloud of dust was rising, and that the foe were riding up.

When, then, I turned and saw the seven Arabs with spears and matchlocks coming slowly toward us, my first emotion was of surprise that they made no furious onset. In fact they had no horses. But our "peers" appeared in the shape of seven excessively ill-favored and habited Arabs, each bearing a long-barrelled matchlock and a spear, with sundry

knives and daggers stuck in belts around their waists. They had more the aspect of stealthy pirates than of gallant Bedoueen.

They came slowly on, and we slowly proceeded. The old Armenian deigned no glance at the foe. We took our cue from him, I merely turning to look into Khadra's eyes, and assure her by my own that I bore her name upon my imaginary shield, her image in my heart.

Nearer and nearer came the Arabs, until I saw that they were within gunshot, and that the battle, before which Troy paled, might at any moment begin. I had no faith in the skill of the Arabs as marksmen, but a discharge of their weapons, while several would probably explode and damage their own party, would also take effect upon some of our camels, and create great confusion. Why should not MacWhirter be the victim, and fall with me, ingloriously burying me under him? or why, alarmed at the aspect of affairs, should he not betake himself, with me upon his back, into the remote desert? I felt the disadvantage of giving battle from a beast who offered so fair a mark to the enemy, and whose motions you could not control.

The warm silence of the day, our sluggish progress, the slow advance of the Bedoueen, and the constant expectation of something, became insupportable

As descendents of the crusaders—upon the most general principles, ought we not to blaze away at these ill-favored Saracens? I handled my pie-knife in a sanguinary mood. I battered MacWhirter's neck. I saw Richard Cœur de Lion smiling scornfully at me through six centuries. But I fairly trembled when I figured Perkyn Pastor wooed by a cluster of rose-red lips to tell that dreadful story of the Bedoueen who beseiged him in a tomb at Petra.

Stung by the thought, I resolved, for my own part, to let fly something at the enemy. My pistols were useless, for I had no ammunition. The pie-knife best suited the hand-to-hand struggle which I savagely anticipated. My cane was too light. I thought for a moment of the umbrella, but the scoffing of the Lion-heart became audible. Then I happily remembered the water-jug, earthen and heavy with water, and with a slim neck to sling it by. Providence clearly pointed to the water-jug, and knowing that he would have small chance of doing it, I commended to his Prophet the soul of whatever scoundrelly Arab I should sacrifice, and grasped my weapon.—

At the same instant the old Armenian reined up his white mare. The camels stopped. The hour had come. We were having "an adventure."

——If this work were publishing in monthly parts,

I should infallibly pause here, and enjoy for four weeks the fame of a man who has had experiences.

The glowing imagination of my rose-lipped reader (happy the Howadji, if such there be !) should sound the alarm and retreat; should behold, and with sympathy, the furious attack—the armed descent from El Shiraz and MacWhirter; the commander's arsenal in full play,—each separate weapon drinking blood; should see the pie-knife reeking with Arabian gore—the feats of valor that illustrated the defense of Khadra, her drooping figure clasped and sustained by one arm of either Howadji, while the other levelled rank upon rank of the foe, and supplied more heroic romances for the future poets of the Bedoueen; should behold the venerable hairs dragged in the dust—those dreamy eyes of Khadra shedding orphan tears in the young moonlight, and the silence of evening and of victory closing over the piles of "Moslem slain—"

Rose-lipped reader, believe it so, nor allow Perkyn Pastor an undivided glory.

The hour had come. I watched the old Armenian, who quietly turned the mare and rode up, gun in hand, to the Arabs.

"Strike for your altars and your fires,"

shouted I from the summit of MacWhirter.

But the old gentleman was actually parleying with the foe, was palpably taking snuff—a Napoleonic trait—upon the eve of battle. The conversation was held in a low tone, and without any violent demonstrations. There was even laughter; and when the commander, who had been listening from a proper distance, came up shaking and rattling, and more heroic than ever, I felt a melancholy reaction, and knew that all was over.

The disputed camel was unloaded, and, after the Bedoueen had assisted in placing his load upon another beast, they graciously exchanged salaams with the Armenian Nestor, and with Mohammed, who wore the happy air of a victor, and slowly retreated, leading the camel with them.

Rose-lipped reader—but what could I do? Nothing was said. What could be said? Had we not "lost the race we never ran?" Could I ever stand again at the tomb of Richard? Could I ever again look Perkyn Pastor in the face?

We plodded on. But I stole another glance at Khadra. In the sunset her dreamy eyes still roamed the horizon, and their soft light overflowed me with forgetfulness and dreams.

XVII.

QUARANTINE.

A GAY cavalier dashed toward us. It was a cool, bright day. Khadra was chatting briskly, and her camel-driver sang more sadly than ever.

Our gay escort caracolled around us as we advanced, chasing young and old from our path, and the people stared at us through the cracks of their doors, as if death, on his horse, with a pale procession of sorrows, were passing by, and not immortal young Howadji, and the beautiful Khadra. Looking at her and at them, Syria vanished, and I was attendant upon superb Godiva, riding through hushed Coventry.

Presently, from among green trees, a vast wall rose against the sky. The sight kindled our gay cavalier, who plunged his spurs more deeply into his horse, and danced around us with greater delight. At the same moment he pointed eagerly at the wall, shining in the sun, and expressed his satisfaction in excited Arabic.

"This is the dragoman of some pacha," I said to myself, reflectively, "who inhabits yonder spacious castle, and who bids us partake of his magnificent bounties."

"Certainly," I said aloud to the commander, "tell him we will avail ourselves of the pacha's gracious hospitality."

"Sir," returned Golden Sleeve.

"What is the function of this individual?" I continued, in the Ercles vein; for the castle and attention seemed to be of that character.

"He is the quarantine guard," thunder clapped the commander.

As Howadji journeying from Cairo, we were, *ex-officio*, infected with every mortal disease, and hence the great yellow wall before us. It was the prison of the quarantine, which is the only method of Christian martyrdom at present legalized by the Prophet's vicar.

It includes the most loathsome incarceration—separation from all but those victims who chance to be of your own party—the constant attendance of a "*guardiano*," who, with a long pole, shoves away from you every one who would wish to shake you by the hand, so that you shall meet your friend or brother, with whom you parted years ago in your native land, and who comes full of all happy or

mournful tidings out of the bosom of your family, but who must shout at you from a distance; and, although living within the same wall with you for days, never touch the hem of your garment. The rack of fleas, the sting of every kind of vermin, the periodical suffocation by assafetida, are only the garnishing horrors of this martyrdom. You lose by it six or eight weeks of your five oriental months. It is the true plague.

I knew all that. But I had not as yet practically experienced a quarantine. I was the child who has not yet burnt his finger, and I wanted to thrust it in. I really did wish to try if the quarantine were so very bad; and I rode up to the portal with a good grace, and passed into the court with the air of a man who arrives to taste the magnificent hospitalities of the pacha.

It was a huge square court, with a clumsy well in the centre. The ground was hard and gravelly, and all around the sides were rough, plastered walls, tauntingly high, and glaring in the sun. A few squalid, miserable figures stood about the court, vacantly staring at us as we entered; each of them in charge of a *guardiano*, with a long pole, which was occasionally levelled to fence them off from each other. Melancholy piles of luggage lay scattered about the court, which presented no festal

appearance at all, and satisfied all curiosity in a moment, and in the most emphatic manner.

The long side of the court, opposite the entrance, was formed by a range of buildings of the same rough plaster, and one story in height. This range was pierced at regular intervals by small, square, cell-like doors, at whose sides were windows in the strictest architectural harmony with the building.

"Those," mused I upon the top of MacWhirter, "those recesses are the obsolete potato-bins of the pacha, whose guests we are."

This was the sum of the prospect. The glaring, rough-plastered and gravel-floored court, with the potato-bins opening into it—the well—the figures—the luggage—and overhead, the cloudless blue noon of Syria. Grace and beauty had clearly perished from the world. One green leaf had been nature, and art, and religion, in that rigid desolation. I stared in blank dismay from MacWhirter, not anxious to dismount, confessing, with groans of soul, that my fingers were already burned to my extremest satisfaction.

But we did dismount, and increased the company of miserable figures standing hopelessly in the court. A *guardiano* smilingly advanced with his long pole, and cheerfully commenced "fending off" the supernumeraries of the establishment who clus-

tered around us. The pack-camels were unloaded They were all led out of the court. Even Mac-Whirter turned his back upon me and went, sniffing and pompous, out into the beautiful landscape. The Pacha—not the illusive host—but our Pacha, stood, wrapped in his huge capote, nursing Achillean wrath.

And not far removed, half sitting upon bales and boxes, the beautiful Khadra looked tranquilly upon the scene.

The cheerful *guardiano* suddenly thrust his pole at the Howadji, and beckoned us to follow him. He led us to the door of one of the potato-bins, and indicated that we were at liberty to begin housekeeping in it. We looked in, mechanically, at the door, and recoiled.

It was a square, gray-plastered hole, with an uneven earthen floor. There was not so much as a wooden peg upon the walls. But a dampness, as of vaults, and in that dampness the vague sense of horrible disease and death, breathed upon us as we surveyed it.

The *guardiano*, slyly watching for some unwary straggler whom he might punch with his long stick, remained close beside us, until the Achillean Pacha moved suddenly aside, and very nearly destroyed the official's centre of gravity. We sum-

moned the commander and told him that we would camp in the court. He shrugged bodeful shoulders, but stepped up to the *guardiano* and proposed that arrangement. It was not permitted by the regulations.

—"But we shall die in that hole."

Golden Sleeve only shrugged impotently. But the *guardiano* smiled cheerfully, with an apparent conviction that we should finally come to it, as very many of our predecessors and betters had done. He was a cheerful Muslim that *guardiano*, and did his business graciously, like the younger hangman in Quentin Durward. He leaned against the wall in the sun, and awaited our determination with the greatest serenity. It was simply his function to keep the world away from us for a certain time, with his long pole. If we thought fit to remain dismally standing in the court, during that time, it was equally agreeable to him, and did not at all embarrass his duties. So he genially stood in the sun, and studied our appearance and costume.

While we were still undecided, two gentlemen emerged from a neighboring bin, were instantly joined by another Long Stick in waiting, and commenced a vigorous promenade. They wore that hybrid costume, half English and half oriental, which John Bull affects in the East. We watched

them with interest; for they had clearly been broken in to the quarantine-life, for several days.

They marched to one end of the court, making Long Stick step more rapidly than the Muslim wont, and then wheeling, returned briskly to the other end, while Long Stick made frequent onsets with his pole upon some incautious straggler. Except for the oriental strain in their dress—the body garment, which was neither coat nor kaftan, yet leaned to the latter without losing the former—the compromising bulge of the trowsers, terminating in red slippers with upturned toes—the bright sash folded around an indubitable waistcoat from Regent-street, and the Rubens hat cinctured with heavy folds of linen; except for this eclectic costume, the gentlemen might have been taking their "constitutional" in a run about the Park, or on the banks of Isis or Cam, and not upon the edge of the Syrian desert, in scriptural Gaza.

While the Howadji watched this animated promenade, and wondered what Sartorian Teufelsdröckh would have thought of the clothes those gentlemen wore, I heard a sound of low laughter over my head, mingled with a greeting—"Good morning, Wind, taking your constitutional? Well, there's truth in the clothes philosophy after all, only you should wear a triple crown on your shovel

hat, and a scarlet petticoat to that waistcoat. The symbol would be more faithful."

And the words died away into the same low laughter, which the promenaders could not hear.

I looked up, and discovered that at each end of the range of potato-bins there was a small upper room, and from one of them Leisurlie was looking out and hailing his friends below. I scanned them more closely, and from the bewildering mixture of hat and turban, I extricated the features of Wind and Shower!

In my surprise, I expected to hear from some other window in the air worthy Mr. Spenlow, saying cheerfully, "There you are again." He did not say so, but there we were: Leisurlie and our Puseyite contemporaries of the Nile, who spread their vast blue pennant so gallantly at Asyoot, and the Pacha and I, all housed for the nonce in the Gaza bins.

We exchanged greetings, while the *guardiani* stood ready for action with their staves. On such terms, conversation was naturally not very fluent, and it was time to consider what we would do.

Looking in at the damp hole once more, we concluded to do precisely what Long Stick said we should do—namely to set up housekeeping in the bin. The carpets and portmanteaus were thrown

in, the rest of the freight thrust after to promote an air of cheerfulness, and Mohammed erected his furnace before the door, and proceeded to cook the dinner. Fortunately it was possible to obtain fresh fruit from Gaza, and the commander, who was as good a cook as he was warrior, undertook to commemorate the day by an original pudding.

Ah! Hadji Hamed, long cook of the Ibis, in whose destiny a desert journey with these Howadji was not included, your image returned in that dreary quarantine, fragrant and cloud-wreathed with the fumes of *kara kooseh* and of *yakhnee*. Hadji Hamed, it is as impossible to speak of the commander's commemorative pudding as it was to eat it.

Quarantine is not lovely. On shipboard it is more tolerable, or in any place, however miserable, whence your eye and soul may refresh themselves with the vision of earth or water.

But in a glaring square court, with no green thing and no gay thing, and no pleasant motion to greet the eye: with the consciousness of the loathsome diseases that have raged in the very bin which incloses you, and the conviction that, if excited imagination should affect your health, longer and more torturing imprisonment and mortal disease, nursed by a cheerful Long Stick in waiting, and attended by an idiot

of an Italian medico, who looks at you from a distance, through assafetida smoke, would be your portion until the good angel death removed you,—under these circumstances the quarantine is an exquisite torture, and is a refinement of cruelty well worthy the attention of the anti-humane movement, which deplores model prisons.

If Mr. Carlyle, as chairman of a committee of the anti-rosewater philanthropists, would proceed upon a visit of examination to the quarantine of Gaza, he would discover its paramount advantage of the combination of the greatest amount of practical, physical suffering with the smallest possibility of mental comfort. There is not the faintest odor of rose-water in any corner of the establishment, nor of the policy which dictates it. Had the journey been earlier performed by that gentleman, we should surely have had one other proposal for the solution of the Irish question, namely: the erection of a quarantine upon the Gaza model, large enough to shovel all Ireland into, there "to digest itself at leisure."

In the quarantine you would read if you could. But your books are as tasteless to your listless mind as cakes to a fevered palate. Carelessly you turn the pages, and rise to stroll in the court. The *guardiano* steps nimbly up and flourishes his pole. You

stalk idly about in the sun, veering toward any chance figure standing in the court, that it may be thrust away by Long Stick. From some neighboring bin, heaped with a mass of filthy Arabs, among whom some dervish or santon chances to be, you hear the wild howl of religious frenzy. Nor can you but shudder, dreading that much longer resistance would tune your witless voice to the same measures.

The commander, lying smoking among the pots and pans, has an introverted aspect, as if meditating some further atrocity in the shape of pudding. And what diabolical puddings might a man not make, who lived long in quarantine! Wind and Shower pass in animated conversation, actually resigned, apparently, to this hiatus in life. You lurch toward them, and your Long Stick parries poles with theirs. The venerable Armenian, whose bin is next our own, is sleeping in the sun; his grave white beard floating over his vesture—like a Roman Senator, you try to fancy, as if fancy had not long since perished.

"After all," you say, looking up and striving to cajole your intolerable ennui, "after all, that is the Syrian sky."

In vain. Even the sky has turned against us. It is brazen and monotonous. Not one soft cloud

wreathes and melts in its depths—not a bird flies singing through the blue.

Only in the twilight your heart is a little comforted. For it touches with soft splendor the rough plaster walls, melting them and fusing, until the compassionate moon rises behind the palms of Gaza, which you cannot see, and, looking into the court of desolation, it builds in the dim air a marble palace of your prison.

And in that moonlight sits Khadra at the door of her bin, singing Arabic ditties of love and sorrow.

JERUSALEM.

"Now wul y telle the ryght way to Jerusalem."

Sir John Mandeville.

"I hope I shall do nobody wrong to speak what I think, and deserve not blame in imparting my mind. If it be not for thy ease, it may be for my own. So Tully Cardan, and Bœthius wrote *de consol*, as much to help themselves as others."

Burton's Anatomy.

"Fürchtet nichts, fromme Seelen. Keine prophanirende Scherze sollen euer Ohr verletzen."

Henry Heine.

I.

PALM SUNDAY.

PALM SUNDAY dawned over Palestine. It was a soft, bright morning, the last of our miserable imprisonment. The day before, Wind and Shower had passed out of the great gate toward Jerusalem. Leisurlie was already gone, and soon after sunrise our camels entered the court to be loaded. The Howadji were incensed with assafetida, and adjudged clean. We should not imperil the health of Syria, and might go to Jerusalem.

In the silence and ennui of those quarantine days, I had full time to remember the country in which we were, and the city to which we were going. Even here in Syria, here in Gaza, city which I had vaguely figured to myself when, a child, I listened wondering to the story of Samson—even here the day came with the old Sabbath feeling, with that spirit of devotional stillness in the air which broods over our home Sundays, irksome by their sombre gravity to the boy, but remembered by the man with sweet sadness.

The shadow of the cross suddenly fell athwart the gleam of the crescent. That Palm Sunday morning, the image which is the genius of Palestine, passed into my heart over reverential thoughts, and hushed hopes, as over strewn olive-branches and under palms, Christ entered Jerusalem. Behind and before—the desert and Damascus—lay the peculiar Orient. But we entered now upon a land consecrated by one life to universal and eternal interest.

The day was warm, the air was still, and we paced stately out of the court into the lonely landscape of Palestine, and turning toward Jerusalem, a myriad emotions whispered in that morning—"hosanna, hosanna!"

At the gate, too, as if so fit a figure of our strictly oriental and poetic dreams must not mingle with our changing thoughts, the grave old Armenian and the beautiful Khadra went another way, and we should not meet again until we reached Jerusalem. As, upon his docile white mare, the venerable father piloted his little caravan away, I could still catch glimpses of the daughter looking curiously at us with her dreamy eyes, could still see the tall camel-driver walking slowly before her palanquin.

It disappeared behind a hedge of cactus. For many days I did not see her again. But a solitary

palm upon a hillock still watched her going, and waved its boughs slowly toward me in melancholy farewell.

I was consoled, however, by my release from prison, and no landscape was ever more beautiful than that which greeted my eyes this morning—doubly beautiful for the long desert journey, and the dreary quarantine. The little hill on which stands Gaza, waved in gentle and graceful undulations, bearing pomegranate, and orange, and date-trees, mimosas, and acacias, in its swell, and among them wound quiet lanes hedged by prickly pear and aloe. Grain waved softly from the distance, and out of the luxurious green, rose the minaret of Gaza, with groups of low houses clustering around it.

Gaza was called the capital of Palestine, and in the ruins of white marble sometimes found there, it is hard to see anything else than the remains of the temple which Samson destroyed.

Our road led by a cemetery of domed tombs. It was bare and desolate, like a ruined town. Then, passing along a spacious avenue, shaded with trees, we emerged upon a sea of grain. It was darkened at intervals by venerable, scraggy olives, and, rocking through it upon MacWhirter, I saw, beyond, a vast reach of bare, green land, partly grain, partly

waste. Far away upon the eastern horizon—a misty blue rampart—stretched a range of hills, the mountains of Judea. Toward the west the green shrank away into low, melancholy sand-mounds, and so crept to the sea.

The landscape was so fresh and fair, that I could have sung with the meadow-larks that darted, singing, in the sun. But it was so lonely and mournful, that the song would have been too sad for a bird's singing. Far as I could see, before and around me, there was no town, no sign of vigorous life. It was akin to the sublime solitude of the Roman Campagna, if to its present desolation you add the nodding grain of its earlier cultivation. In outline, and extent, and hue, the hills were not unlike the Sabine or Volscian mountains, seen from Rome.

But not the glittering fame of Roman story consecrates the Campagna hills to the imagination, as the bleak Judea mountains are consecrated by a single life. The tranquil sweetness of the summer sky breathes over this landscape as does that gracious memory over the human heart. In Palestine that figure is forever present. On these infinite, solitary grain-tracts moves that form, as in Uhland's ballad the reapers see the image of their benignant pastor walking in the pleasant morning. It informs

the landscape with an inexpressible pathos. A man of sorrows, and broken-hearted. Reviled, persecuted, and martyred, now as then, and more than ever at Jerusalem.

Passing this tract upon a grassy path, we crossed a belt of low hills, and descended into a series of basins, or dry lake-like reaches of arable land. There were infrequent groves of olives, whose silvery, sere foliage, and rough, gnarled trunks, did not disturb the universal sadness by any gayety of form or feeling. All day the blue line of the Judean hills waved along the horizon, pointing the way to Jerusalem. Patches of grain sang in the low wind. Grain makes the landscape live, thrilling it with soft motion. Grass or turf is like lining, but grain like long silken hair.

Presently we were in the midst of ploughing. Hundreds of acres of ploughed land stretched beyond sight, and the general agricultural activity was strange to see. The plough was the same that Joseph and Mary saw when they fled along this land to Egypt, and the teams of camels and donkeys harnessed together, and the turbanned husbandmen in flowing garments, would have dismayed our most antiquated cattle-show.

A warm wind blew with the waning day, and the sun drifted westward in a vaporous air. The

camp was pitched upon one of the belts of low hills dividing the basins of land—and the sea, which we could discern from the tent, moaned vaguely, as the Judean mountains sank into night.

II.

MEHEMET ALI.

I DO not wonder that Mehemet Ali burned to be master of Syria, and struck so bravely for it.

His career was necessarily but a brilliant bubble, and his success purely personal. That career was passed before the West fairly understood it. It was easier for the Jews to believe good from Nazareth than for us to credit genius in Egypt, and we should as soon have dreamed of old mummied Cheops throned upon the great pyramid and ruling the Pharaoh's realm anew, as of a modern king there, of kingliness unsurpassed in the century, except by Napoleon, working at every disadvantage, yet achieving incredible results.

He was the son of a fisherman—made his way by military skill—recognized the inherent instability of the Mameluke government then absolute in Egypt, and which was only a witless tyranny, sure to fall before ambitious sense and skill. He propitiated the Sublime Porte, whose Viceroy in Egypt was only a puppet of state, practically imprisoned

by the Mamelukes in the citadel—and he gained brilliant victories in the Hedjaz, over the Wahabys, infidel and schismatic Muslim.

In 1811, he accomplished the famous massacre of the Mamelukes in the court of the citadel, of which Horace Vernet has painted so characteristic a picture, and for which Mehemet Ali has been much execrated.

But in Turkish politics, humanity is only a question of degree. With Mehemet Ali and the Mamelukes it was diamond cut diamond. They were a congregation of pestilent vapors, a nest of hoary-headed tyrants, whom it was a satisfaction to humanity and decency to smoke out and suffocate in any way. Mehemet Ali had, doubtless, little enough rose-water in his policy to satisfy the grimmest Carlyle. The leader of sanguinary Albanians and imbruted Egyptians against wild Arab hordes was not likely to be of a delicate stomach.

But he was clear-eyed and large-minded. He had the genius of a statesman rather than the shrewdness of a general, although as a soldier he was singularly brave and successful. Of all his acts the massacre of the Mamelukes was, perhaps, the least bloody, because, by crushing the few heads he had won the victory. A sudden and well-advised bloodshed is often sure to issue in a peace which

saves greater misery. It was Cromwell's rule and it was Napoleon's—it was also Mehemet Ali's, and the results usually proved its wisdom.

Moreover, in the matter of this massacre, the balance of sympathy is restored by the fact that only a short time previous to the Mamelukes' banquet of death in the citadel, they had arranged Mehemet Ali's assassination upon his leaving Suez. By superior cunning he ascertained the details of this pleasant plan, and publicly ordered his departure for the following morning, but privately departed upon a swift-trotting dromedary in the evening. There was great consequent frustration of plan and confusion of soul among the Mamelukes, who had thought, in this ingenious manner, to cut the knot of difficulty, and they were only too glad to hurry with smooth faces to the Pacha's festival, too much in a hurry, indeed, to reflect upon his superior cunning and to be afraid of it. They lost the game. They were the diamond cut, and evidently deserve no melodious tear.

Mehemet Ali thus sat as securely in his seat as a Turkish pacha can ever hope to sit. He assisted the Porte in the Greek troubles, perpetrating other massacres there; and afterward, when Abdallah, Pacha of Acre, rebelled against "the Shadow," Mehemet Ali was sent to subdue him. He did

so, and then interceded with the Porte for Abdallah's safety.

Meanwhile, Mehemet Ali had ascertained his force, and was already sure of the genius to direct it. He had turned the streams of French and English skill into the agriculture, manufactures, and military discipline of Egypt. His great aim for years had been to make Egypt independent—to revive the ancient richness of the Nile valley, and to take a place for Egypt among the markets of the world. He accomplished this so far, that, restoring to the plain of Thebes the indigo which was once famous there, he poured into the European market so much and so good indigo that the market was sensibly affected. His internal policy was wrong, but we cannot here consider it.

Watching and waiting, in the midst of this internal prosperity and foreign success and amazement, while Egyptian youth were thronging to the Parisian Universities, and the Parisian youth looked to Egypt as the career of fame and fortune—as the young Spaniards of a certain period looked to the diamond-dusted Americas—in the midst all the web Mehemet Ali sat nursing his ambition and biding his time.

Across the intervening desert, Syria wooed him to take her for his slave. Who was there to make

him afraid? Leaning on Lebanon, and laving her beautiful feet in the sea, she fascinated him with love. He should taste boundless sway. Eastward lay Bagdad and Persia, thrones of caliphs who once sat in his seat—why should not he sit in theirs? Then with softer whispers she pointed to the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus, and looked what she dared not speak.

I do not wonder that he was enchanted. I do not wonder that he burned to be master of the superb slave that lay so lovely and fair in the sun, dreaming as now we see her dream, under the vines and olives. His peer, Napoleon Bonaparte, against whom, in Egypt, his maiden sword was fleshed, whom he loved to name and to hear that they were born in the same year, had thus seen from Elba the gorgeous fata-morgana of European empire. How could Mehemet Ali reflect that sallying forth to grasp it, that peer had bitten the dust? That fate deterred the Pacha, as the experience of others always deters ourselves—as a blade of grass stays the wind. Shall not you and I, my reader, swim to our Heros, though a thousand Leanders never came to shore?

It was this very Syria through which we plod, this brilliant morning, that seduced Mehemet Ali.

A land of glorious resources and without a popu-

lation. Here grow wheat, rye, barley, beans, and the cotton plant. Oats are rare; but Palestine produces sesame and dourra, a kind of pulse like lentiles. Baalbec grows maize. Sugar and rice are not unknown at Beyrout. Lebanon is wreathed with vines. Indigo flourishes without cultivation on the banks of the Jordan. The Druses cultivate the white mulberry. Gaza has dates like those of Mecca, and pomegranates as fine as those of Algiers. Figs and bananas make the gardens of Antioch tropical. From Aleppo come pistachio-nuts. The almond, the olive, and the orange, thrive in the kindly air; and Damascus revels in twenty kinds of apricot, with all the best fruits of France.

Many of the inhabitants pass us, and we can see what they are. They are repulsive in appearance, the dregs of refuse races. They look mean and treacherous, and would offer small resistance to determination and skill. Mehemet Ali had little fear of the Syrians.

He could not resist the song of the syren; and suddenly "the Eastern Question" agitated political Europe, and the diplomatic genius of the three greatest states—England, France, and Russia—was abruptly challenged by the alarming aspect of the Syrian war, which threatened, with a leader despising the political stagnation and military imbecility

of the vast realm of "the Shadow of God on earth," to issue in a new empire.

Mehemet Ali, having subdued Abdallah, Pacha of Acre, and saved his life and throne by intercession with the Porte, was surprised that Abdallah harbored all fugitives from Egypt. He observed that, following his own example, Abdallah was introducing the European discipline into his army, and was enticing into his service many young officers who had been Europeanly instructed at his own expense.

He expostulated with Abdallah, and appealed to the Porte. The Sublime Porte, like other political sublimities, hesitated, meditated—

> "Then idly twirled his golden chain,
> And smiling, put the question by."

Mehemet Ali, with expectant eyes fixed upon Syria, sat silent, his hand trembling with eagerness, and ready to grasp the splendid prize. "The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces" of a new oriental empire, rose, possible, in the light of hope.

His army was carefully disciplined. The fame of its tried officers had been won upon the battle-fields of the empire. He had a fleet and all the resources of the latest military and marine science.

Over all, he had his son Ibrahim, already proved in Arabia and Greece, of a military genius peculiarly oriental, swift, and stern, rude in thought, but irresistible in action—the slave of his father's ambition, the iron right-hand of his will. Internal prosperity and external prestige sealed Mehemet Ali's hope and determination.

Against him was arrayed the worldly magnificence of the Ottoman Porte. But the bannered Muslim lance that had thundered at the gates of Constantinople, and, entering, had planted itself upon the earliest Christian church, and flapped barbaric defiance at civilization, was rusty and worm-eaten. Its crimson drapery fluttering, rent, upon an idle wind, would be inevitably shivered by the first rough blow of modern steel.

And the great powers?—

Their action was, of course, doubtful. There was a chance of opposition, a probability of interference. But the grandeur of the stroke was its safety. From the universal chaos what new combinations might not be educed?

No sooner, therefore, had the Porte "put the question by," than Mehemet Ali proceeded to answer it. The Egyptian army, headed by Ibrahim Pacha, advanced into Syria, and sat down before Acre. Cherishing the old grudge against Abdallah,

the Porte, now that a decided part had been taken, smiled faintly in approval. But the conduct of the war betrayed resources of ability and means which kindled terrible suspicions. The firman came from Stamboul, commanding the Pacha of Egypt to withdraw into his own province. He declined, and was declared a rebel.

The bridge thus fell behind him, and only victory or death lay before.

For six months Ibrahim Pacha lay before Acre, and, on the 27th of May, 1832, he entered, by bloody assault, the city which Richard Cœur de Lion and Philip Augustus had conquered before him, and from which Napoleon Bonaparte had retired foiled. The Syrian war began.

The victorious army advanced, triumphing. The Syrian cities fell before it. The stream of conquest swept northward, overflowing Damascus as it passed. The war was no longer a quarrel of two pachas, it was a question of life or death for the Turkish Empire. Vainly the Sultan's choicest generals struggled to stem the torrent. The proud walls along the Golden Horn trembled, lest their pride should be for the third time humbled, and this time, as the last, from the Asian shore.

Northern and western Europe started amazed at the wonderful spectacle, listening across the hushed

Mediterranean to the clang of arms resounding in the effete East, as the appalled Romans heard the gusty roar of the battle of the Huns high over them, and invisible in the air.

Surely, it was only the interference of the three powers that saved the Sultan's throne. That alone deprived us of the pageant of another oriental military romance, so rapid in inception, so entire in execution, that we should have better comprehended those sudden, barbaric descents of the middle ages, which changed in a moment the political aspect of the invaded land—in a moment, because the mighty appearance of life and power was but a mummy, which a blow would pulverize.

One man, however strong and skillful, could not withstand the force of Europe, and Mehemet Ali retired, baffled, before the leaders of the political trinity that a few years before had dethroned Napoleon.

The crisis of his life was passed, and unfavorably for his hopes and aims. At the age of sixty-five he relinquished the struggle with fate, and still one of the great men of a century, rich in great men, with no hope before him, and none behind—for since kingly genius is not hereditary, your divine right is a disastrous fiction—he sank slowly away into dotage.

Before the end, however, both he and his son Ibrahim showed themselves to the Europeans who had watched with such astonished interest the culmination and decay of their power. Ibrahim Pacha, with his fangs removed, shook his harmless rattle, for the last time in the world's hearing, at a dinner given him by young Englishmen, at the Reform Club in Pall Mall, and the wreck of Mehemet Ali, drivelling and dozing, took a hand at whist with young Americans in a hotel at Naples.

Father and son returned to Egypt, and died there. A vast mosque of alabaster, commenced by Mehemet Ali, and now finished, crowns Cairo, "the delight of the imagination." He wished to be buried there; but he lies without the city walls, in that suburb of tombs, upon the cracked sides of one of which a Persian poet has written—"Each crevice of this ancient edifice is a half-opened mouth, that laughs at the fleeting pomp of royal abodes."

All the winds that blow upon Cairo, laugh that mocking laughter, and in any thoughtful mood, as you listen to them and look over the city, you will mark the two alabaster minarets of Mehemet Ali's mosque, shafts of snow in the rich blue air, if you will, but yet pointing upward.

Leaning on Lebanon, and laving her beautiful feet in the sea, the superb slave he burned to pos-

sess, still dreams in the sun. We look from the tent-door and see her sleeping, and the remembrance of this last, momentary interest which disturbed the slumber, reminds us that it will one day be broken. So fair is the prize, that, knowing all others desire her as ardently, no single hand feels strong enough to grasp it, and the conflict of many ambitions secures her peace.

Yet it is clear that nerve and skill could do what they have done, and so spare is the population, so imbecile the government, and so rich the soil, that a few thousand determined men could march unresisted through Syria, and possess the fair and fertile land.

III.

ADVANCING.

This last throb of life, in the history of Syria, invades but for a musing moment the abiding interest of the land. Yet as MacWhirter lumbers sluggishly along you cannot escape the mood of reverie through which the various forms of its fate will pass.

The landscape is still of the same open, basin-like character, and of course lies toward the hills of Judea, which seem, this morning, like the misty Jura seen from Lake Leman. The nearer country swells and moves in vivid lines of green, and the fresh young leaves of the fig, upon the heavy limbs, are touched by the sun into golden flakes. The fences are hedges of prickly pear. The houses are of clay or stone, where it can be found, clean-looking for such, and warmer than the Egyptian houses. Scant garden-plots of vegetables dot the fields, and presently, over olive groves, we see the domed tombs of Ramleh.

Here we strike the main road from Jaffa, on the

coast, to Jerusalem. It was a high-road of the Crusaders in old times, and of Christian pilgrims now. The sun has seen fairer sights upon it than the Howadji are likely to see; but they recall one of its legends as they pass.

According to the "Saga of Sigurd, the Crusader," King of Norway, when that fair-haired young monarch reached Jaffa, on a pilgrimage, in 1110, King Baldwin of Jerusalem apparently doubted whether, if there were such a region as Norway, its king could be a king genuinely royal. True, therefore, to the free masonry of royalty, he ordered costly draperies to be spread along the road, from the shore to the mountains, saying that if Sigurd rode over them he was doubtless used to such luxury at home, and would thereby approve himself a king. But if he avoided them, he, in turn, must be avoided as a shabby and suspicious potentate.

The ship came to shore, and King Sigurd debarking, mounted his horse and rode carelessly over the gorgeous cloths, as if his road all over the earth were so carpeted. And the good king Baldwin, charmed by the easy grace which certified his guest's habituation to regal luxury, received him "particularly well."

More delightful than this, and in the true Arabian strain, is the story of Sigurd's entry into Constanti-

nople, where he surpassed by his fabulous splendors all the extravagance of oriental genius.

"Fabulous splendors of course they were," hummed the inexorable Pacha, as, turning our backs upon Ramleh, and following in Sigurd's footsteps, I asked him if he did not suppose that, if Baldwin, king of Jerusalem, heard of our coming, he would carpet the rest of the way, and send us picked Arabians whereon to caracole over the carpet to his palace.

I have no doubt that the crispness of his answer arose from the sudden contrast in his mind, of a carpeted road and an Arabian, with the stony path over which he was jogging, upon jerking old El Shiraz. For, although a very estimable animal, he did one morning tumble over sideways, just as the Pacha was gurgling him down.

On which occasion, also, MacWhirter, seeing like Golden Sleeve's Pomegranate at another time, that he had fallen too far behind, relentlessly set forward on his soul-shaking trot, while I was sitting upon him sideways, surveying Syria through blue goggles, and holding the blue cotton umbrella over my head. The violent motion caused me instantly to slide, as the unhappy Golden Sleeve slid, not backward, indeed, but sideways, down MacWhirter's flanks. Clutching the stakes before and be-

hind, I instantly sacrificed the blue umbrella, which was planted by the wind, like a huge mushroom, in the desert.

Struggling, in alarm, to throw my right leg over the saddle and so balance myself, I expostulated with MacWhirter, and with spasmodic energy pulled the halter until I drew his head quite round, and saw his cold devilish eyes fronting my alarmed face. He enjoyed my apprehension too much, and I pulled his head back again, while I dangled at his side, conscious that if I slipped off he might betake himself into the desert, leaving me to foot it on to the caravan, from which I could not be perceived, and which advanced through the sand about as rapidly as I could walk. But I finally threw my leg to the other side and clung to him until he overtook the caravan and relaxed his speed and my suffering.

Then it was that the Pacha, seeing me at the mercy of MacWhirter, naturally wished to show to the sun which had seen Sigurd's horsemanship, a little artistic camel management, and imperiously gurgled El Shiraz down. Bending, and rocking, and groaning, he began to kneel, but in the very act, he fell sideways, and the Pacha's leg escaped an ignominious doom only by a sudden spring.

The chagrin of that moment was in his mind, I

am sure, when he said curtly—"Fabulous splendors of course they are."

The sun burned over the fertile valley. Donkeys, camels, and horses passed us upon the road, along whose sides active ploughing was going on. Of each traveller we met, we inquired if he came from El Khuds, Jerusalem—and more anxiously, if he had seen the venerable-bearded Armenian, who was to join the Jaffa road before arriving. Some said yes, and some said no, and some, with sublime disdain, passed silently. The mien of one of the latter kind, a grave and white-bearded old Turk, whose only emotion seemed to be incredulous surprise that he should be supposed to know any thing, reminded me of Koeppen's pleasant story.

Koeppen was pursuing his archæological investigations at Constantinople, and with nervous energy and earnestness was one day speculating upon the cannon ball which is built into the city walls, near one of the gates. He ran to and fro, and surveyed, and calculated, and surmised: then pondered, wrote and wondered—the very incarnation of antiquarian zeal—and at length espied a grave group of Muslim, seated, and tranquilly smoking in the shade. Like a fly upon the Sphynx, was the Professor's determined activity before their profound repose. But suddenly rushing up to them—spectacles elevated,

book and pencil in hand—he addressed one of them in rapid Turkish, and inquired if he could tell anything about the spot.

The sublime ignorance of the Turk recoiled at this imputation of knowledge. But without rising, he slowly removed the pipe from his mouth, and as if it were enough that Allah knew all, he said contemptuously,

"You Frank, I don't know what I had for breakfast."—

Crossing a little ridge, we came nearer to the mountains. I fancied the eyes of Khadra lighting the dark gorges, and in the afternoon we entered a narrow valley of the hills of Judea. As we left the wide plain smiling in the sun, I heard a voice in my mind crying: "In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea." I looked upon the rough edges of that wilderness, and saw that they were low, and stony, and treeless. The valley was planted with bright green grain, and in the lone water-courses among the stones, there was the blent beauty of a thousand wild flowers.

But upon the steep mountain sides, rocks and sterile patches lay in grim desolation, consoled by infrequent shrub oaks and laurel; and winding among them, deeper and farther into the hills, by

lonely huts and ruined wells, and ragged olive-groves upon terraces, we found a spot less dreary than the most, and there the camp was pitched.

IV.

JERUSALEM OR ROME.

Among the mountains, the night air was as cold as that of our October. The camp lay at the entrance of a narrow gorge, and the door of the tent commanded the valley behind us.

Golden Sleeve warned us, as he brought in the leathery tea, that this was the very place to antici pate the onset of "*bad people*," and we, remembering the oriental proverb that "the worst Muslim are those of Mecca, and the worst Christians those of Jerusalem," were ready to believe. But it was worth while to come to Jerusalem, were it only to prove that there could be "worse Christians" than those we had left behind.

Nor was it more consoling when the commander entered later in the evening, to announce the arrival of a party of Muslim pilgrims; for Jerusalem is holy to the sons of the Prophet as well as to us. I inquired anxiously if they were making the pilgrimage for the first time. For what say the astute Arabians? "If thy neighbor have made one pil-

grimage, distrust him. But if he have made two, make haste to leave thy house."

These little ripples of incident died away upon the surface of the grave thoughts of that evening. Jerusalem was then no fable or dream, but it lay beyond these mountains, and I should see it tomorrow.

I wrapped myself in my capote, and sat smoking at the door of the tent.

To any young man, or to any man in whose mind the glow of poetic feeling has not yet died into "the light of common day," the first view of a famous city is one of the memorable epochs of life. Even if you go directly from common-place New York to common-sense London, you will awake in the night with a hushed feeling of awe at being in Shakespeare's city, and Milton's, and Cromwell's. More agreeable to your mood is the heavy moulding of the banquetting-room of Whitehall, than the crystal splendors of the palace in the park. Because over the former the dusk of historical distance is already stealing, removing it into the romantic and ideal realm.

But more profound, because farther removed from the criticism of contemporary experience, is the interest of the Italian cities. They represent characteristic epochs of human history. Rome, Florence

Venice, are not names merely, but ideas. They were the capitals of power, that, in various ways and degrees, ruled the world.

Deeper still is the feeling that hallows the cities beyond Italy; for beyond Italy are Athens and Jerusalem.

Rome, Athens, and Jerusalem—the physical, the intellectual, and the moral, do we long doubt which is the greatest?

The art of Greece is still supreme. The Empire of Rome has never been rivalled. But the spirit which has inspired art with a sentiment profounder than the Greek—the faith which has held sway subtler and more universal than the Roman—are they not the spirit and the faith that make Jerusalem, El Khuds or the holy, because they were best illustrated and taught by a life whose influence commenced there?

More cognate to ready sympathy, more appealling to the sensuous imagination is the pomp of imperial Rome, as with camp-fires burning from the Baltic to the Euxine, and from farthest Euphrates to the Pillars of Hercules, its gorgeous confusion of barbaric splendor and Grecian elegance, gleams athwart the past.

Fascinated by that splendor, as by auroral fires streaming through the sky—recognizing the forms

of its law, its society, and its speech, inherent in his own—marking over all historic lands and submerged in African solitudes the foot-prints of its triumphant march, the young student revering in Rome the might of his own human genius, going out to possess the earth, reaches the gates of its metropolis with an ardor that merges in romance.

Hence were hurled the thunderbolts that shook the world, and whose vibrations tremble yet. Hither come the poet, the philosopher, the statesman, the scholar, and in no city of the world was there ever assembled so much human genius in every kind, and in every time, as in Rome.

Do you remember, Xtopher, when we came to Rome over the hushed desolation of the Campagna, that separates it from the rest of populous Italy, as the grim belt of the middle ages separates it in history from modern times?

It was at sunset of a late October day. Trees had not waved to us nor birds sang since we left the park-like woods of Civita Castellana in the sultry, cloudy morning. Solitary shepherds in rough skins, knitting and croning melancholy songs, and the infrequent curl of smoke from some tomb or volcanic cave inhabited by lonely men, were the only signs of life. Sad, low ranges of bare hills melting into the level distances, the confused undulation of

brown turf, and the ghosts of distant mountains shrinking over the horizon, were all the features of the landscape.

Yet, at times, even there, where it seemed that human genius had never coped with the mysterious desolation, the sudden ring of the horses' hoofs upon solid pavement reminded us that the broad smooth stones were the Flaminian Way, one of the avenues of old Rome to the uttermost parts of the earth, and we sank away in reveries of the days when this barren landscape was a sea of grain singing to the very gates of Rome.

We were silent and thoughtful, that Campagna day. Day never to be forgotten, whose pensive sun can never set. The drowsy tinkle of the horses' bells, the monotonous minor of the vetturino's song —sound yet in memory, clearly and sadly as then, nor are drowned by the glorious bursts of many orchestras, nor by the passionate pathos of the Miserere, heard since that day.

The afternoon was waning when we reached the edge of a little hill. Upon those dreams of Rome, rose suddenly Rome itself. It lay beyond us and below, silent and solemn. A group of domes and spires only, the rest was hidden by a hill. But as we proceeded, the city advanced into view, a long procession of architectural pomp—domes, and spires,

and campaniles mingling in rich confusion, until, when all had passed before, the dome of St. Peter's closed the pageant like a monarch. In the last rays of the sun, the golden cross blazed in air. Lost in a chaos of memories, expectations, and dreams, we leaned from the carriage and gazed at Rome.

So, as I smoked the pipe of meditation at the door of the tent, among the hills of Judea, waiting for the day which should lead me to Jerusalem, returned the vivid image of the moment and the feelings which led me to Rome. It was natural, for Rome and Jerusalem, as the two extremes, are the two most memorable cities of history.

Yet, against the claims of its superb Italian rival, what has the Syrian city to show?

Not Solomon in all his glory; for Hadrian was more magnificent, if less wise. Nor the visible career of the Jews, whose empire was greatest under Solomon, but was then only a part of a later Roman province. Jerusalem does not rival Rome by the imperial pomp of its recollections, nor by its artistic achievements; for its only notable remains are part of the foundation of Solomon's Temple, while the most imposing ruins of Syria are the Roman relics of Palmyra and Baalbec. Nay, Rome came from Italy, and scattering the Jews, destroyed Jerusalem.

To the myriads of men who throng whole centu-

ries of his tory—as thearmy of Xerxes the plains of Greece—headed by the eagle and asserting Rome, Jerusalem opposes a single figure, bearing a palm branch, and riding upon an ass into the golden gate of the city. That palm is the magic wand which shall wave the discordant world into harmony; that golden gate is the symbol of the way which only he can enter who knows the magic of the palm. That single figure is the most eminent in history, the highest hope of art is to reveal his beauty—The sublimest strains of literature are the prophecies and records of his career—the struggle of society is to plant itself upon the truth he taught.

In the vision of the past, as upon an infinite battle-field, that single figure meets the might of Rome, and the skill of Greece, and the wit of Egypt, and the flame of their glory is paled before his glance. He rode in at the golden gate, and was crucified between thieves. But it is the victim which consecrates the city. In vain the heroism of the republic and the purple splendor of the empire, would distract imagination and give a deeper charm to Rome. The cold auroral fires stream anew to the zenith, as we sit in the starlight at the tent door But a planet burns through them brighter than they, and we no longer discuss which city we approach with the profoundest interest.

V.

THE JOY OF THE WHOLE EARTH.

Before the stars faded the tent was struck. In the brilliant dawn a party of Russian pilgrims rode by into the mountain gorge. Leaving MacWhirter to follow with the caravan, I ran on alone, up the ravine and toward Jerusalem.

The path climbed steeply by the side of a dry water-course, and led through a succession of mountain defiles. The air was exhilarating and birds sang. The wind was fresh and cool, and a thousand flowers were beautiful upon the barren hills. Sometimes the hills were terraced with rock, sometimes covered with loose stones, and the gray olive leaves twinkled in the rising sun.

Many of the valleys were green and lovely. As in Italy, the little towns were built high upon the hillsides. But no sweets bells, as in Italy, rang through the morning air. I passed the ruins of two churches, dating probably from the Crusades. They were massive and picturesque. Hanging plants waved over them funereally in the bright

air, and the gnarled old olives clustered about them in dumb sadness.

But although I paused under the olives which had probably seen the builders of the churches and knew all the chances of their fate—they whispered nothing in my ear: only, as the morning breeze rustled in their foliage, I seemed to hear the wild music of six centuries ago pealing faintly through the valley—at least it was the best expression the trees could give to their remembrance of it—and, in distant olive groves, shimmering in the sun, I saw the flashing spears and crests of the Crusaders' army.

The mountain air was exhilarating. I ran eagerly up the winding road, hoping that each turn would reveal Jerusalem; but from each new height only the billowy panorama of hills unrolled around me, the surface fading from vivid green into the blue haze of distance.

Upon one of these paths I overtook a pilgrim. He was evidently a poor European, and was going patiently forward by the side of a small donkey, with a Muslim driver. The pilgrim carried a small pack upon a stick over his shoulder. I was passing him relentlessly, but his forlorn aspect made me pause, and he greeted me with a German good morning.

It was a German tailor apprentice, who had come

down the Danube to Constantinople, and had thence sailed to Jaffa. Landing there he had hired a donkey, and was now coming to Jerusalem. And the reason he gave for the journey was that it was something *besonders* (odd) to go to Jerusalem.

Truly the Crusaders, whose track he followed, had not suffered more upon the way. He had experienced every kind of small mishap, and he detailed his sufferings with all the gossipy querulousness of his countrymen. It had rained, and blown, and frozen, during the voyage from Constantinople, and he, as a deck passenger, had been the butt of the fierce elements. He thought it an outrage that, upon a German boat, only one person spoke German. That person was the cook, and he probably employed that tongue only to snub and buffet the poor pilgrim, for the latter, with an air of great disgust, said the cook was a *dummkopf* (a blockhead).

But bad as was the sea-voyage, the land-journey was worse. Here nobody spoke German, and donkeys wouldn't go, and his ankle was swelled, and if Jerusalem was far away, he certainly could not reach it that day, although he had been going since one o'clock in the morning.

Then, with a movement of despair, he made a rush at the donkey to get on. But the saddle-cloth

fell off, and when it was arranged the donkey stood still, and absolutely declined to stir.

"But you shouldn't pay a para," said I, "for such a beast as that."

"*Ja, mein Herr*, (yes, sir), but I *have* paid," said he with a remorseful shrug.—

The driver then made some suggestions in Arabic, doubtless of great practical value, but, unfortunately, unintelligible.

"*Wie meinen Sie, was sagen Sie?* (what do you say?)" inquired the poor Teuton in bland despair.

For they could not understand each other, and although the donkey would not go with the German, I observed that he moved nimbly enough with his master.

But I could not tarry for the swelled ankle, and the slow donkey, and the slower Teuton. I walked with him for a half-hour, gave him what advice I could, comforting him by the assurance that, even at his rate of travel, he would reach Jerusalem by sunset, and then wished him good-day.

—"*Leben Sie wohl* (farewell)," said he, in a melancholy tone, as I ran along. "*Leben Sie wohl: ach! mein Gott, mein Gott!*"

The mountains rose more grandly, and I clambered up to broad, stony table-lands, whence the prospect was bleak and sad. Vast ranges of bare

hills receded to the horizon. "In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea."

I passed rapidly over this lofty, breezy table-land, with an inconceivable ardor of expectation. Often the pinnacles and shining points of rock upon a distant hillside, startled me with a doubt that I saw Jerusalem; and, at every change in the landscape, I paused and searched the mountainous desolation to distinguish the city. But the majestic play of morning vapors with the sun and the mountains, mocked the scrutiny of the longing traveller, and gradually inspired a statelier hope.

As I paced more slowly along the hills, the words of the psalm suddenly rang through my mind, like a sublime organ-peal through a hushed cathedral: "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the Great King—."

They passed; but in their stead arose an imperial vision.

Through the stupendous vista of rocky mountain-sides, I should behold the joy of the whole earth, lifted upon a lofty hill, flashing with the massive splendor of towers, and domes, and battlements, darkened by the solemn sadness of cypresses, and graceful with palms. The delicate outlines of hang-

ing gardens, of marble terraces and balconies, and airy pavilions should cluster within. Triumphant bursts of music, "with trumpets, also, and shawms," and the chime of bells, harmonious with the soft acclaim of friendly voices, should breathe and pulse from the magnificent metropolis, and preach, more winningly than John, in the wilderness of Judea.

In the summer of that Syrian noon, this was the spectacle I thought to see, the majesty of its associations manifested in the city.

And, as I knew it nearer, I walked more slowly, dreaming that dream. The camels of Wind and Shower passed us returning from Jerusalem. Our caravan overtook me, and I went forward with the Pacha and the commander.

The high land unrolled itself more broadly. The breezy morning died into silent noon. In the imminent certainty, the eagerness of expectation was passed. Golden Sleeve preceded us a little distance, and we followed silently. Suddenly he stopped, and, without turning or speaking, pointed with his finger toward the north.

We reached his side and looked. There was a low line of wall, a minaret, a black dome, a few flat roofs, and, in the midst, a group of dark, slender cypresses, and olives, and palms.

There lay Jerusalem, dead in the white noon.

The desolation of the wilderness moaned at her gates. There was no suburb of trees or houses. She lay upon a high hill, in the midst of hills barren as those we had passed. There were no sights or sounds of life. The light was colorless; the air was still. Nature had swooned around the dead city. There was no sound in the air, but a wailing in my heart. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that stonest the prophets, and killest those that are sent unto thee!"

VI.

O JERUSALEM!

JERUSALEM stands upon the point of the long reach of table-land over which we had approached it, as upon a promontory.

The ravines betwen the city and the adjacent hills are the valleys of Jehoshaphat and Hinnom. The Mount of Olives is the highest of these adjacent hills, and commands Jerusalem. It is crowned by a convent, deserted now, and at its foot toward the city, on the shore of the brook Kedron, is the garden of Gethsemane—a small white-walled inclosure of old olives.

There are no roads about the city. It is not accessible for carriages, nor would its narrow streets permit them to pass. This profound silence characterizes all the eastern cities, in which wheels do not roar, nor steam shriek, and it invests them, by contrast, with a wonderful charm. The ways that lead to the gates of Jerusalem, are horse-paths, like dry water-courses. No dwellings cluster about the

city, except the village of Siloam, a town of "*bad people*," a group of gray stone houses on the steep side of the deepest part of the valley of Jehoshaphat. In that valley also is the tomb of Absalom—a clumsy structure, but one of the most conspicuous objects outside the walls—and the graves of the Jews covered with flat slabs, the great number of which crowded together, seems to pave parts of the valley. Pools and fountains are there also, sacred in all Christian memories.

Toward the southeast from the city, the mountain lines are depressed, and the eye escapes to the dim vastness of the Moab Mountains, brooding over the Dead Sea. From the Mount of Olives you see the Dead Sea, dark and misty, and solemn, like Swiss lakes seen from mountains among mountains The hill-sides around the city are desolate. But in the valley-bottoms, on the soil that has washed from the hills, are olive groves, and in the largest and fairest stands a ruin of no great antiquity, but picturesque and graceful among the trees. This ruin and the mossy greenness and fresh foliage around the pool where "the waters of Siloam go softly" are the only objects which are romantic rather than grave, in the melancholy landscape.

These are the features of that bright and arid, but still melancholy, landscape. It lies hushed in

awe and desolation; and sad as itself are the feelings with which you regard it.

One only figure is in your mind; but remembering him and all his personal and traditional relations with the city, the single pure romance which flashes across the gravity of its history, returns to you as you gaze. Looking wistfully from the walls, you hear again, as under the olive-trees in the mountains, the barbaric clang of the Crusaders' army. Listen, and listen long. The finest strain you hear, is not the clash of arms or the peal of trumpets. The hush of this modern noon is filled with the murmurous sound of chanted psalms, and along the olive valleys, toward Mount Olivet, you see the slow procession of the Christian host, not with banners, but with crosses, to-day, pouring on in sacred pomp, singing hymns, and the hearts of Saracens within the walls are chilled by that strange battle-cry.

Night and silence follow. Under the Syrian stars, this motley host, driven by fierce religious fury from the whole civilized world, kneels in its camp around Jerusalem, singing, and praising God. The holy sound dies while we listen, and the clash of arms arises, with the sun, upon the air.

Jerusalem bleeds rivers of blood, that flow down the steep mountain sides, and a roar more terrible

than the raging sea curdles the hot silence of noon. The clash of arms dies, with the sun, upon the air. No muezzin at twilight calls to prayer. But in the court of the Temple, ten thousand of his faith lie slain, and the advancing Crusaders ride to their horses' bellies in blood. It is the 15th of July, 1099, and that evening Jerusalem is, for the first time, properly a Christian city.

But once more, while we yet stand lost in these memories of the city, an odor, as of rose-water, sweetens the air. The Christian bells have ceased ringing suddenly. A long procession files from the gates, and the voice of the muezzin again vibrates through the city. It is Saladin, Sultan of the Saracens, who is purifying the mosque of Omar, who is melting the Christian bells, and dragging the Christian cross through the mire; but who, receiving the Christian prisoners with gracious courtesy, repays their sanguinary madness with oriental generosity, sending them away loaded with presents, and retaining in the city the military friars of St. John, to nurse the sick.

Thus bold and defined, like its landscape, are your first emotions in Jerusalem.

But while you stand and see the last pomp of its history pitching its phantom-camp around the city, the sun is setting. The bare landscape fades away

Around you are domes and roofs, and beyond the walls you see the convent of the Mount of Olives. Thoughts more solemn than these romantic dreams throw their long shadows across your mind, even as the shadows of the minarets fall upon the silent city. Again you see the waving of palm-boughs, and a faint cry of hosanna trembles in the twilight. Again, that figure rides slowly in at the golden gate, and you hear the voice—"Daughter of Zion, behold thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass."

VII.

WITHIN THE WALLS.

WITHIN the walls, Jerusalem is among the most picturesque of cities. It is very small. You can walk quite round it in less than an hour. There are only some seventeen thousand inhabitants, of whom nearly half are Jews. The material of the city is a cheerful stone, and so massively are the lofty, blind house-walls laid, that, in pacing the more solitary streets, you seem to be threading the mazes of a huge fortress. Often the houses extend over the street, which winds under them in dark archways; and where there are no overhanging buildings, there are often supports of masonry thrown across from house to house. There are no windows upon the street, except a few picturesque, projecting lattices.

Jerusalem is an utter ruin. The houses, so fair in seeming, are often all crumbled away upon the interior. The arches are shattered, and vines and flowers wave and bloom down all the vistas. The streets are never straight for fifty rods; but climb

and wind with broken steps, and the bold buildings thrust out buttressed corners, graced with luxuriant growths, and arched with niches for statue and fountain. It is a mass of "beautiful bits," as artists say. And you will see no fairer sight in the world, than the groups of brilliantly-draped orientals emerging into the sun, from the vine-fringed darkness of the arched ways.

Follow them as they silently pass, accompanied by the slave who bears the chibouque. Follow, if it be noon, for soon you will hear the cry to prayer, and they are going to the mosque of Omar.

There are minarets in Egypt so beautiful, that, when completed, the sultan ordered the right-hand of the architect to be struck off, that he might not repeat the work for any one else. They are, indeed, beautiful—yet if their grace cost but a hand, the beauty of this mosque were worth a head.

The mosque of Omar occupies the site of Solomon's temple, about an eighth of the area of the whole city. It is the most beautiful object in Jerusalem, and the most graceful building in the East. It is not massive nor magnificent; but the dome, bulbous, like all oriental domes, is so aerial and elegant, that the eye lingers to see it float away or dissolve in the ardent noon.

The mosque of Omar is octagonal in form, and

built of bluish-white marble, over the sacred stone on which Jacob dreamed, and whence Mohammed ascended to heaven. It is one of the two *temples* of the Muslim faith, that of Mecca being the other. These temples are consecrated by the peculiar presence of the Prophet, and are only accessible to true believers. Ordinary mosques are merely places of worship, and are accessible to unbelievers, subject only to the stupid intolerance of the faithful.

The beautiful building stands within a spacious inclosure of green lawn and arcades. Olive, orange, and cypress-trees, grow around the court, which, in good sooth, is "a little heaven below," for the Muslim, who lie dreaming in the soft shade, from morning to night. It is a foretaste of Paradise, in kind, excepting the houris. For, although the mosques are not forbidden to women, Mohammed said it would be better for them to have prayers read by eunuchs in their own apartments.

In the picturesque gloom and brightness of the city, the mosque is a dream of heaven also, even to the unbelievers.

There are many entrances, and, as you saunter under the dark archways of the streets, and look suddenly up a long dim arcade upon the side, you perceive, closing the vista, the sunny green of the mosque grounds, and feel the warm air stealing out-

ward from its silence, and see the men, and women, and children praying under the trees.

Or at sunset, groups of reverend Muslim pass down the narrow street, returning from prayer, looking like those Jewish doctors, who, in the old pictures, haunt the temple on this very site.

It is an "amiable tabernacle" that you behold. You feel how kindly, how cognate to the affections of piety, are the silence and freedom of this temple—its unaffected sobriety, the sunny spaces upon marble terraces, and the rich gloom of orange darkness in which the young children play and the fountains sing, so that no place on earth is so lovely to those children, and so much desired.

The sagacity of the Roman Church aimed at gratifying this instinctive requirement in religious associations, of an atmosphere of beauty, by its patronage of art. In place of this cypress darkness, it has the dimness of colored glass—for these blowing roses, it spreads muslin flowers upon its altars —for these bars of sunshine, it parades gold. Thus its churches have the aspect of eternal summer and twilight; and thus flowers, the symbol of the perfection of external nature, serve but as ornaments in the worship of the Creator, while the twilight hushes and subdues the mind into religious reverie.

—You know not how long you thus stand, in

pleasant thought, looking down the dim arcade, to that golden green. But if your steps obey your wish, and lead you toward the gate, some grisly and grim old negro steps athwart the sun, and brandishes his club about your head, heaping such scornful curses upon it, that you remember, with savage satisfaction, the Crusaders riding breast deep in Muslim gore, within those very precincts; but, for the same reason, you do not much wonder at the surliness, and clubs, and curses, of the old negro.

One day, as I stood looking in with great longing, and wondering whether the green, jasper door of Paradise, which is in the mosque, was indeed so beautiful as the poets tell those sitters in the sun, I wished that I had been Sir John Mandeville, Knight, or eke one of his "companye." For he says—

"I came in there and in othere places where I wolde; for I hadde Lettres of the Soudan, with his grete seel; and commonly other men have but his Signett. In the whiche Lettres he commanded of his specyalle grace to all his Subgettes, to lete me seen alle the places, and to informe me pleynly alle the mysteries of every place, and to condyte me fro Cytee to Cytee, zif it were nede. and buxomly to receyve me and my Companye."

Whether it were pity for me, or pride in the

beauty of the temple which affected him, I know not, but the old Muslim graybeard who that day was the Cerberus of Paradise, did seem to look upon me as a poor, miserable peri, and he stroked his beard and shrugged his shoulders as if in struggle with his conscience whether to let me in. I looked very modest and humble, and altogether unworthy to enter the sacred precincts, hoping that Mohammed would work a miracle for me.

But graybeard was inflexible. I had no "grete seel," not even the "Signett of the Soudan," although, indeed, a firman from the sultan himself to enter the mosque would be regarded as an awful sacrilege. It is pleasant in Jerusalem to see human nature assert its imperiality, and to remember how individual Romanists question the conduct of the Pope, and individual Muslim that of the Commander of the Faithful, although both are theoretically regarded as God's Vicegerents.

The beautiful mosque is the centre of picturesque and poetic interest in this city, and we were pleasantly lodged not far from it. The door of our room opened upon a house-top: for now, as of old, in those soft eastern climates, you may live in the air upon the roof, and understand the force of the prophecy, that those upon the house-tops should not come down.

At night, the moonlight slept along the still, steep Via Dolorosa, which we saw from our window, and the Mount of Olives rose dark against the east. At morning, the song of birds mingling with the muezzin's cry awakened us, and Jerusalem lay so silent in the Syrian day that Marianna in the moated grange was not awakened to more slumberous stillness.

We step into the streets half wondering if there is any population there. Blear-eyed, melancholy spectres swarm along the narrow ways, trailing filthy garments, but with intense scorn of the clean unbelievers. Lepers sit by the sunny walls, and your soul cries "unclean, unclean," while you loosen your purse-strings. Pilgrims of all kinds and faiths pass, wondering, and the trade of Jerusalem is in religious relics. In this metropolis of three religions, Islam, Christianity, and Judaism, only the first and last have each a single external feature that is beautiful in remembrance—the mosque of Omar and the wailing at the stones of the Temple. The Christianity peculiar to Jerusalem is unmitigatedly repulsive.

Our old friend, poet Harriet Martineau, speaks a good deal of the pain of being hated, and she certainly suffered unhandsome martyrdom in the millet-stalks thrown in her face, and the pouting and

spitting of small children. But, bating the grizzly old negro at the gate of Paradise, I never received any more unpleasant treatment than that silent scorn which I liked to see. It was doubly grateful in Jerusalem, because it expressed the feeling that few can escape for such Christians as you see there. When a Turk scorned me with his eyes in passing I knew that he thought me a fellow of the Christians he was used to see, and as I had the same impatience in my heart when I passed them, I could not be angry that he lacked the discrimination to see that I was no ordinary eastern Christian, but a great American Mogul.

The Muslim are peaceable enough; for they are prodigious cowards. In 1832, these stout gates of Jerusalem opened to Ibrahim Pacha without a blow. The children pout sometimes, and laugh at the Christian, may even throw a missile at him when they are safely behind a wall or door. But there is no hate in their hearts. The child smiles, and his eyes flash more brilliantly—although one day that smiling will be scorn, and that flash the fire of hate. Of course, cowards are always valiant against the weak, and a European woman is a very unpleasant phenomenon to the orientals. It is, therefore, not difficult to believe that poet Harriet's tribulations were disagreeably real.

There are no rich men in Jerusalem. Every one has the air of a citizen of ruins, and begs like a Belisarius.

The oriental genius applied to begging is delightful. It has the same sententious gravity that marks it in every development, and the same poetic phrase. I was constantly sure that I saw the Mecca beggar of whom Burckhardt tells a characteristic story.

Upon his first visit to Mecca, that traveller had employed a delyl, or guide, who was useful to him. But when he came again he had no use for him. He told him so. But the undaunted delyl came regularly to Burckhardt's dinner, and, after satisfying his present hunger, he produced a small basket which he ordered his host's slave to fill with biscuits, meat, vegetables, or fruit, which he carried away with him. Every three or four days he asked for money—saying loftily, "It is not you who give it; it is God who sends it to me."

Burckhardt soon wearied of this arrangement, and told the delyl, with great emphasis, that he could endure it no longer.

In three days the delyl returned and begged a dollar.

—"God does not move me to give you anything," replied Burckhardt gravely, "if he judged it right

he would soften my soul, and cause me to give you my whole purse."

"Pull my beard," said the delyl, "if God does not send you ten times more hereafter than I beg at present."

"Pull out every hair of mine," replied Burckhardt, "if I give you one para until I am convinced that God will regard it as a meritorious act."

Upon hearing which the delyl arose suddenly and walked away, saying sublimely, "We fly for refuge to God, from the hearts of the proud, and the hands of the avaricious."

Legless old Beppo, of the Spanish steps in Rome, was more cheerful, if less sublime, under disappointment. If you refused the baiocco to his hat held toward you with a broad leer of confidence, he only smiled and said, "*Dunque domani, Signore* (To-morrow then, sir)."

VIII.

BETHLEHEM.

THE scenery of the Gospel story is vague until you are in Palestine. Literature and art, forgetting climate and costume, set the events of that history in the landscape and atmosphere they know. All the religious pictures lack local truth. The temple in Raphael's *Spozalizio*, is of the Roman architec ture of his day. Paul Veronese's Suppers and Marriage Feasts are gorgeous chapters of Venetian life, and this—which is fair enough in Italian pictures, of which the essential character was so striking and beautiful—reaches the extremest absurdity in the Dutch sacred pictures, especially Teniers' St. Peter in Prison. It is fair enough, viewed by strict art, yet it is a loss to the pictures; for this golden air, and picturesque costume, and lovely landscape, would have singularly deepened their effect.

So we said as we rode over the bare hills to Bethlehem, and paused at the well of which David longed to drink, but poured out the water unto the Lord.

Scant patches of grain and banks of wild flowers waved gaily to us as we mounted again, wondering if, haply, from this spot the wise men saw the star. The distant hill-sides were the fields of Boaz. The artistic eye of Leisurlie was struck with the sweeps of the mountain lines, whose sides uniting at the base, allowed no proper valleys, but only a narrow water-course. The landscape was bare and sere with the melancholy olive, and, above a grove of figs and olives, rose upon a hill-top, the gray walls of Bethlehem.

—"How beautiful," said Leisurlie, "would be this landscape in a picture of Ruth. How just in a religious picture, of which the chief interest is a woman, this olive mountain-side crowned with gray Bethlehem, in which a woman gave the world its best gift."

He, too, we mused, as our eyes wandered over the lands of Boaz, but a gleaner in the fields of Time—yet whose harvests heap the future like a granary.

Our way rolled through the billowy land, and we reached, at length, stern little Bethlehem, sitting, like a fortress, upon the mountain.

A large church is its chief feature, and as you stand in its cold vastness, you would be in Italy, except for the swarthy faces, whose mysterious eyes

follow your movements with grave curiosity. It is nothing but a large, cold church, garrisoned by a few friars, and seems discordant with that spot where nothing cold or bare should be. With very mingled emotions you descend toward the grotto, directly under the church, which makes Bethlehem famous.

Winding with tapers down narrow steps, you emerge in the irregular excavations among the rock, and behold what they call the cell of St. Jerome. But you do not linger. The Franciscan precedes you to the grotto of the Nativity, and there can be no reasonable doubt of its identity.

He opens the door. A gleam of soft light, and a warm odor of incense stream outward. In that moment there is no more Franciscan, nor Italian church, nor taper. Your knees bend beneath you and your eyes close

They open upon the grotto, gorgeous with silver and golden lamps, with vases and heavy tapestries, with marbles and ivories—dim with the smoke of incense, and thick with its breath. In the hush of sudden splendor it is the secret cave of Aladdin, and you have rubbed the precious lamp.

Then your sense is seized in the voluptuous em brace of the odors—of the brilliant flames, motionless in the warm air—of the sheen of tapestry, and

the flexile richness of the monks' robes at the altar, and your dazzled sense reels, an intoxicated Roman, through this Bethlehem grotto, which the luxurious Hadrian, after Rome had conquered Jerusalem, consecrated to Adonis.

But you see that it is low and irregular, that the ceiling and walls are rock—that it is only a rough place of refuge if you strip away gold and tapestry. You see human figures stretched motionless upon the ground, kissing a small circle of jasper with silver rays—the shrine of all Christendom. The figures do not rise. They lie for long, long minutes speechless—tears streaming from their eyes, and a sob vibrating at intervals through the grotto. As you gaze, the vision of the Bethlehem landscape returns to you—lonely, solemn, bare. The warm sweet air in which you stand is filled with strange music,

> —"Divinely warbled voice
> Answering the stringed noise."

And its measures, like the waving of palms in the moonlight, breathe through your heart, "on earth peace, good-will to men."

These are your mingled emotions in the grotto of Bethlehem. Romance and religion blend there more closely than at any other spot in the Holy Land.

Climbing again into daylight, you look from the lofty windows of the refectory of the convent down upon the field of the shepherds. It is a steep mountain-side, dotted with olives. It is not glad and gracious, as if that music, like heavenly dew, kept it fresh forever. Sad is the landscapes and the day at Bethlehem.

The glory of the sunset strikes across the mountains as you return. Silent and pensive, your talk is no more of pictures. You ride along the "fulle fayre waye, be pleynes and wodes fulle deletable," as good Sir John Mandeville found the road to Bethlehem. And if a solitary rose redden the sunset in the fields, you remember his story of the maid who was martyred here, and as the fire began, she prayed, and the burning brands became red rose-trees, and the unburnt, white rose-trees, full, both, of blossoms and the first roses that ever bloomed.

IX.

LIFE IN DEATH.

"YES," said Leisurlie, "I am convinced of the truth of the proverb. At least, whatever may be the fact of the Muslim at Mecca, there is no doubt that the Christians in Jerusalem are the worst of all Christians."

"Heaven help us, then," commented the Pacha.

It was in the warm twilight, and we had been riding all day outside of the city, down in the valleys among the olive groves, delighting in the many points far below the walls, whence we looked up through nearer trees, vineyards, and fig groves, and saw the battlements of Jerusalem looming along the verge of the abyss.

Grand and endless material of picture is here Bartlett, in his picture of the Pool of Siloam, shows its form. But in all the Eastern illustrations of that accomplished artist, the desert and river are too much adapted to the meridian of the drawing-room. The views represent the rude, and majestic, and desolate country, too much as the fancy of Laura

Matilda figures it. The grand pathos of the Syrian landscape is not there, except to those in whose minds the forms of the pictures refresh the feeling of actual experience.

Returning at sunset to the city, we passed Wind and Shower, accompanied by a half-dozen friars, sallying forth upon a walk toward the garden of Gethsemane. The good fathers were very snuffy, and shambled vigorously along. The gentlemen of eclectic costume and creed, glided sentimentally at their sides.

And thus, we mused, the world over, sturdy superstition leads sentiment by the nose.

But the sun had set while we climbed the hill, and the gates of Jerusalem were closed.

We rode up to them and knocked. There came no response, and as the shadows deepened, the desolation of the stony hills became more desolate as we thought of passing the night in a tomb.

"We must open a parley," said Leisurlie, and by way of prelude, we all thundered in unison upon the gate of St. Stephen.

There came no reply. But over the city walls floated the cry of many muezzin, like melancholy music in the air. *Al-la-hu-Ak-bar*, *Al-la-hu-Ak-bar*, sighed the wind along the valley of Jehoshaphat. Jerusalem was an enchanted city, in that moment

a vast palace of Blue Beard, and we heard the moaning cry of the victims, heedless of their deliverers thundering at the gate.

—"Once more unto the breach, dear friends," cried Leisurlie, "and this time keep it up until consequences of some kind ensue."

Holding the horses, we battered the gates again, nor desisted, until we heard a voice within. The words we could not distinguish, but could easily imagine them to be in harmony with Blue Beard's Castle—"What ho! without there," in Turkish.

"What ho! within there," cried the dramatic Leisurlie.

We paused to hear the undoing of bars and bolts But we did not hear them. Only a reiterated Turkish "What ho!"

—"We must communicate with them," said the valiant Leisurlie, rather vaguely; for we were alone, and our supply of Arabic, Turkish, Syriac, or of and available tongue, hardly equalled the Italian of Khadra's mother.

"Precisely," said the Pacha, who had sadly bruised his knuckles in the onset, "we must communicate with them."

"Oh, certainly, let's communicate," perorated I.

We paused. After a few moments, Leisurlie, as if rehearsing and composing a speech, began—

"*Howadji Ingleez*, (English travellers)." Then he paused, and the Pacha added—

"*Bucksheesh*, (Reward)."

"*Bukara*, (To-morrow)," I struck in.

"*Täib kateir*, (Very good)," concluded Leisurlie; and we left the riddle to the reading of the guards inside. We meant to say with oriental brevity, "Admit the English gentlemen, and be well paid to-morrow."

The negotiation was successful. The everlasting gates of Jerusalem lifted up their heads, and as we clattered over the pavement, through streets which, like those of Pompeii, are only stone ruts between elevated walks, we saw crowds of pilgrims thronging the streets, and remembered that it was Good Friday evening.

There had been arrivals at the hotel. Nile friends from Cairo, by the Long Desert and Mount Sinai. The Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Duck, and the dragoman-ridden Eschylus. But Verde Giovane was gone. He had already subdued Jerusalem, and was marching upon Damascus.

In his place, however, Mercury, whimsical god of travel, presented Frende to our attention—the good English Quaker youth, who had burst out of England, celibacy, and the drab propriety of Quakerism, at one leap; and now, in the most brilliant

of blue body-coats, with brass buttons, flaming waistcoats, and other glories untold, was making his bridal tour in the East.

Frende's plans of life were original. He had not travelled in England, had scarcely been to London, never upon the Continent; but, like Verde, had shipped himself and bride directly from Southampton to Alexandria. He did everything in the East, that everybody else did. You had but to hunt up some impossible place in the Guide-book, and suggest it to Frende—and he departed the next morning to explore it. It struck me with surprise, that on such occasions, his alacrity was in the degree of his anticipation of damp, slimy places; but I soon learned the reason. When the East was accomplished, he proposed to visit and explore America, and then return to the strict privacy of English country life.

I soon learned the reason why he visited damp places with ardor. He had what my French friend Gûepe calls *une specialité*, and that was a passion for reptiles. It seemed to be only a sense of duty to that department of zoology which had brought him to the East.

One day upon the Nile he had invited Verde Giovane, with whom he had a mysterious affinity, to visit his boat, and after dinner Frende assured

him with trembling delight that he had found a new species of ichneumon, which, it seems, he pronounced as if spelled aitchneumon.

Verde, whose mind had been confused by the Greek and other architectural names in Egypt, fancied it was a new kind of temple, and remembering one name of learned sound and meaning not to be surpassed, he asked with the anxiety of an antiquary—

"Has it a propylon?"

"Aitchneumon," whispered Frende excitedly.

"Oh, yes, yes," replied Verde vaguely.

"Would you like to see it?" demanded Frende, tartly, rather hurt at the lack of enthusiasm for ichneumons.

Verde answered at random, for he had no clue to an idea in the matter; and Frende, touched by his indifference, declined to show it, merely remarking that he "had him in a box."

"Good heavens!" said Verde, and rapidly took leave.

"Gunning," cried he to his companion, as he ran breathless into the cabin of his own boat, "Gunning, Frende has H. Newman in a box!"

Nor was it until Gunning explored the mystery by questioning Frende, that he discovered there was no unhappy Mr. Newman boxed up on Frende's boat.

Frende had a fine career upon the desert. When he approached Mount Sinai, his dragoman shouted and raised his finger. Frende beckoned to him.

"Achmet," said he, "ten piastres for the first scorpion from Sinai."

Whenever he alighted, either for lunching or encamping, he drew out a large jar of specimens preserved in spirits, ran rapidly about the space for a long distance beyond the spot, and turning over all the promising stones he consigned to the jar whatever reptiles, worms, little snakes, scorpions, bugs, or beetles rewarded his search. When it was too late to find more, he ran back to the tent, drank his tea, read a chapter in the Bible, and went to bed. In the morning he devoted all the time of preparation for departure to the interests of science, and during the day's march his contemplation of the precious jar was only interrupted by searching glances over the desert to detect any signs of zoological promise in stones or shrubs.

This evening, in Jerusalem, I was telling the story of our day's ride in the valleys to the younger Miss Duck, and dwelt somewhat elaborately and fervently upon the beauty of Siloam in the rich afternoon light, with Jerusalem towering above. I was even attempting some poetical reminiscences from Byron, Bishop Heber, and Tasso, when Frende, who

had been attending very patiently, ventured to interrupt my romance and quotations, exclaiming,

"Beautiful, my dear sir, truly beautiful; I seem to see Siloam. Pray, did you anywhere on the damp wall observe a new species of the centipede?"

Leisurlie smiled.

"For in our life alone does nature live",

said he, as he took his candle.

X.

ON THE HOUSE-TOP.

THE mosque of Omar is the most beautiful object in Jerusalem, and the church of the Sepulchre is the most unpleasant.

The solemnity of the landscape around the city, its silence and desolation, impress the mind strongly with the spiritualism of Christianity, and to a degree that almost reaches severity. You feel that not only the sanctity of the city, but the austerity of the landscape, fostered the asceticism of the early hermits here.

The image of Christ in your mind perpetually rebukes whatever is not lofty and sincere in your thoughts, and sternly requires reality of all feeling exhibited in Jerusalem. In Rome, you can tolerate tinsel, because the history of the Faith there, and its ritual, are a kind of romance. But it is intolerable in Jerusalem, where, in the presence of the same landscape and within the same walls, you have a profound personal feeling and reverence for Jesus.

As you meditate the features of his character, and the beauty of holiness penetrates your mind more deeply—as you recognize the directness of his teaching and the simplicity of his life—as you feel how constantly he appealed to the natural affections of the heart—you are lost in sorrow and dismay before the melancholy abuses of the institution which has aimed to perpetuate his spirit among men.

Were the Scribes and Pharisees alone, you ask, guilty of giving stones for fish?

Turning the pages of ecclesiastical history—of that church which especially has hitherto represented Christianity—or of the various sects whose differences so fiercely clash—does it seem to you that you contemplate the career of an institution with which Jesus promised to be, until the end of the world?

—Or glancing from books to life, and regarding the aspect of any community professing Christianity—as Paris, London, or New York—would you notice eager selfishness as its characteristic, or forbearance, forgiveness, and self-denial?

If now, Jesus were sitting where he once sat, upon the Mount of Olives, which we can yonder plainly discern in the full moonlight, and perceived the worship which we shall see this Good Friday even-

ing—scarcely less idolatrous than that of wild Africans to a Fetish—should we not hear his voice wailing again over the city—

"Oh Jerusalem! Jerusalem! thou that stonest the Prophets."

XI.

IDOLATRY.

"Thy silver is become dross, thy wine is mixed with water."

The Rev. Dr. Duck declined to go to the church of the Holy Sepulchre, this Good Friday evening, to see the "Romish mummeries." He had been attending evening prayer at the English chapel upon Mount Zion, and had been kneeling and praying, "From pride, envy, malice, and all uncharitableness, Good Lord deliver us!" Between the courses at dinner, he blandly exposed the "absurd Romish traditions of the sacred spots in and around Jerusalem."

Among other doubts, he had disputed the authenticity of the tomb at Bethany, called the tomb of Lazarus. "I have been to-day to Bethany,' said the Rev. Dr. Duck, "and I saw there the cave which the Romanists called the tomb of Lazarus. It is an excavation in the rock, and we descended several steps before we reached the spot where Lazarus is said to have lain. But, my dear sir, how

very absurd to suppose that this could have been the tomb mentioned in holy Scripture; for our Saviour is distinctly stated to have said—'Lazarus, come *forth*.' Now would he have used that word if he had meant come *up*?"

This reasoning sufficed to the Rev. Dr. Duck's mind to destroy the identity of the traditional religious places. Decidedly he could not go to see the "Romish mummeries."

But as we passed into the court of the house, upon our way thither, we heard the Rev. Dr. Duck reading aloud to his family. And these were the words he read.

"The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself. God I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterous, or even as this Publican:

"And the Publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying—God be merciful to me a sinner!"—

The church of the Holy Sepulchre is possessed by the Latins, Greeks, Armenians, Copts, and Abyssinians. The Greeks are the richest, and are under the immediate protection of Russia, and they monopolize all the best places in the church, except the sepulchre itself The exterior of the building

is Byzantine. The interior has no architectural pretension or beauty. The whole middle space is inclosed, forming a church within a church, and the inclosure is the Greek chapel. In front of this is the small temple built around the sepulchre itself, and upon the sides of the Greek chapel are broad passages in which are shown several spots of traditional interest—as that where the post of flagellation stood—which post you may see, and that where the clothing was divided. Finally, you ascend a steep staircase and reach a small upper chapel, which is Calvary, and a circular spot under the altar is the exact site of the cross.

The interior of the church is bare and desolate. The scant and dirty hangings and trappings, the miserable pictures, the soiled artificial flowers, the entire dearth of grace and delicacy, are very mournful. There is not a solemn spot in the building, but the tomb itself. A motley crowd is constantly swarming through the passages, and there is the perpetual scuffling of many feet and the hum of hushed voices. The finest figures are the Bedoueen from the desert, who stand in postures of natural grace and dignity, and who, with the flowing robes, and brilliant Mecca handkerchiefs wreathed around their heads, make the only picturesque and pleasing groups.

The Greek pilgrims are the most numerous, and entirely surpass the Latin in the fervor of their devotions. I have never seen anything so abject as their conduct before the altar in the Calvary chapel. You can scarcely recognize them as men, so sunken do they look in degraded ignorance. Their genuflexions are remarkable for their magical suppleness. They stand, rapidly repeating prayers before the altar, and then fall to their knees and upon their faces, touching their foreheads, and kissing the floor. Then up again, and down, with incredible celerity. This continues sometimes for a half-hour and they then stroll away through the church, buying crosses, beads, and mother-of-pearl shells made at Bethlehem.

Directly under the dome of the church, is the sepulchre itself. It is inclosed in a small temple, divided into two parts, of which the first is an anteroom, and the other a small cabinet, in which is the marble tomb. The anteroom is hung with lamps, and a priest stands at the door, shuffling the crowds of worshippers to and fro, and taking snuff in the intervals. But he has great respect for persons; for when we appeared, although he said that we were heretics, he hustled an unwashed company from the door, and greeting us as English, smilingly ushered us in.

The air of the outer room was warm and odorous with incense. The faithful were kneeling on the floor, weeping, kissing the pavement, and muttering prayers. From the interior room the pilgrims were coming out backward and with bent heads. They paid no attention to our Frank costume, they were wrapt in emotion.

We entered the interior cabinet, half of which is occupied by the tomb. It is covered with a marble slab, smooth with the myriad kisses of generations; over it is a narrow marble shelf, along which are arranged artificial flowers. It is hung with golden lamps, a priest stands silent in the corner forever, and the warm air is faint with perpetual incense.

Before the tomb was a figure which is among the saddest in my memory. It was an old man, a Bulgarian, deformed, and covered with scanty rags. His emotion had passed into idolatrous frenzy. Throwing himself back upon his knees, he contemplated the tomb with streaming eyes—then stretched his arms over it, and laid his face against the marble with idiotic delight. Seized by a delirium of devotion, he poured out a series of adjurations with inconceivable rapidity. He grasped frantically at the tomb—he touched his forehead to it—his words became a bubbling at the mouth—his head fell on one side, and he sank at full length,

motionless, upon the floor. The priest presently touched him. He stared wildly for a moment, then rising to his knees and clutching at the tomb, he shuffled out backward, still kneeling, still stretching out his hands, covering the threshold with passionate kisses and drenching it with tears.

We withdrew from the sepulchre humiliated by that spectacle. It was not the ecstacy of piety—it was the frenzy of superstition. The spirit which had rent and torn the poor Bulgarian was the same that plunges crowds beneath the car of Juggernaut, and beats drums while children burn in the arms of Moloch.

We turn away. The night advances, and the church rapidly fills. The brain is dizzy with the incessant genuflexions, crossings, and kissings, on every hand. Wearied and mortified, you long for one sight, one sound, that might suggest to you the grave serenity of Jesus—when suddenly the door communicating with the convent opens, and the procession enters.

The superior of the convent, mitred, richly draped, and bearing a candle, is followed by all the monks. The pious pilgrims crushing toward the priests, seize lighted tapers and swell the train. It winds, a motley and strange multitude, through the dim passage by the Greek chapel. The scuf-

fling of hurrying feet ceases as they gain the procession. The monotonous murmur of low voices dies away. The low responses of the friars end, and a sublime chant peals through the silence.

The vast building is overflowed with music. The solemn chords swell along the church, their majesty and sincerity protesting against the tawdry idolatry of the place. Long unused to music, which is rarely heard in the East, the grandeur of this old Italian chant, which first I heard in St. Peter's, is doubly grand. Proudly it asserts the greatness of God, and the dignity of man. Its superb harmonies scorn the superstition they are evoked to aid—for what thoughtful man can call the spectacle which we now behold, worship. This music of Allegri chanted by these monks, is as a spirit of heaven subject to gnomes—as Ariel to Caliban. It comes at their bidding, yet in coming it does not serve them, but the ends of its own beauty and nature. Swept up, upon its soaring strains, we float away into the clearest vision, of that life of love and duty, and renew to it there, the oath of loyalty, which was well nigh lost in the church of the Holy Sepulchre.

It melts—it fails—it dies into softer and more exquisite modulations. It wails around Calvary and the Sepulchre as once the winds of heaven may have wailed there—softly, more softly—shaming

its use by its sweetness, and wooing to the worship in spirit and in truth.

The procession stopped at each of the stations, and the music, pausing, died in long, sweet reverberations through the dark church. At each station a sermon was preached, and at each in a different language, that every pilgrim in the crowd might have a chance of understanding. Then the chorus swelled again, and with censers swinging incense, the crowd passed to the next station, making altogether seven pauses.

When the procession went up to the Calvary chapel we awaited its return, and strolled about the church.—

A lofty gallery surrounds that part of the church in which the Sepulchre stands. Part of this gallery is devoted to the Armenian women, and pausing under it I searched its brilliant groups for one face, as boys the matted blossoms of summer fields, for their choicest flower.

I saw it. Through the azure clouds of incense looked Khadra's dreamy eyes, roving over the tumultuous wilderness of men below, as they had glanced over the desert. And like that fairest flower of summer fields was she arrayed. Not cardinal flowers in the dusk shadows of water-courses, gleam with more splendor than she through my memory

now. Eastern women dare, what the western do not dream. Even the pictured women of Titian, and Paul, and Giorgione, are pale before the complexions and costumes of the East

Khadra's eyes, attracted, perhaps, by the Frank dress, rested at length upon my figure. I looked up at her, and her glance overflowed me with the warm solitude of the desert. There was no church, no throng, no preaching—but a boundless silence, and Khadra looking at me. A smile broke along her mouth. It was the dawn stealing over the moonlight of her glances. She was playing with a flower, and I approached so as to stand directly under the gallery.

At that moment the sublime chorus pealed again from the chapel, and the procession began to descend. Then, whether startled by the sudden burst, or willing to acknowledge, in the sanctity of the church, and from her inviolable height, an acquaintance which could be no more than a dream, Khadra dropped the flower, and it fell into my hands.

Meanwhile, a Turkish guard had entered to keep order during the final ceremonies. They pushed the pilgrims backward with their guns, treating them with utter contempt. It was a commentary upon the ceremonies that the fights of the Latin and

Greek Christians in the church were, until recently, so sanguinary that Muslim were obliged to enter the tomb of Christ to preserve the peace among his followers.

They were now holding a space clear about a marble slab, upon which the body of Jesus is said to have been washed, before his burial. Upon this, when room was made, a friar laid a lace-edged shroud and a small velvet pillow. The crowd pressed forward, but the Turks thrust it violently back; and the colonel, seeing that we were Howadji of a certain importance, beckoned us to the inner circle, and then, quietly turning his back upon the slab, continued, in that position, to smoke his chibouque during the remaining ceremonies.

As the procession descended the steps from Calvary, I saw Wind and Shower holding candles, and weeping profusely. The crowd was very dense upon the stairs. There were several consular dignitaries, and some ladies, with the rest. All leaned toward the slab, in earnest and wondering attention. The tapers flared wildly over the wild faces thrust forward with eager curiosity. Only the Muslim and the monks who immediately surrounded the slab, were unconcerned. The true believers of one faith looked contemptuously upon those of the other, and smoked. Those of the other preserved a

stolid indifference, or scolded among themselves, and took snuff.

The scene, which was hitherto only painful, became shocking when four monks brought forward a waxen image, four feet long—a ghastly idol, in an agonized posture, meant to represent Jesus after the crucifixion, and really resembling a cast of Casper Hauser just famishing—and laid it, lean, shrunken, and puny, upon the lace-edged shroud or sheet on the slab.

The mitred superior then knelt and anointed it with oil, while Wind and Shower leaned more earnestly forward over the railing of the stairs, still holding the candles, still weeping; while, in the deep distances of the church, the wailing music moaned, as if angels were grieving. The echoes died away, and a friar preached an Italian sermon. It was artificial and cold. The Turkish colonel smoked; the brethren yawned and snuffed; a French lady quietly surveyed the figure through her lorgnette, precisely as I had seen her survey the hippopotamus at Cairo, and with the same kind of interest.

That French lady with the lorgnette, and the English gentleman who had told me at dinner that there was too much common-sense abroad now-a-days for martyrdom, are remembered upon that

Good Friday in Jerusalem, not less than the poor Bulgarian in the tomb.

It was after midnight when these things ended. With mingled feelings of wonder, humiliation, indignation, and sorrow, we turned from the church of the Holy Sepulchre; and I know no place where you encounter such faint traces of the spirit of Christianity.

The splendor of St. Peter's appeals to you irrespective of what it represents. Pictures and architectural grandeurs, and the romantic pomp of the processions, have an independent value. But it is not so with the gilt gewgaws of a poor chapel, although the genuine sentiment in the worshipper might make them endurable to him. And here in Jerusalem, in the very presence of the Sepulchre, and the profound reality of Christ's life, ignorant and repulsive monks, quarrelling and dozing, and shambling in dirty gowns about a bare and desolate building, which looks like a dilapidated old curiosity shop, carrying disgusting idols through a crowd abjectly superstitious—these things do not satisfy any known condition of delight.

I do not wonder that the Muslim boys spit at these men, and hate Christians; for their idea of Christianity is derived from the indecent struggles and shabby splendors of this place, and the swarm

of miserable devotees from the Danubian provinces, who yearly inundate the city. I do not wonder that those children escape, like a cluster of timid birds, from the cold gloom of the church of the Sepulchre, into the broad, green, sunny spaces of the mosque of Omar.

Ever since the Crusaders entered the city, and baptized the holy places in Muslim blood, through all their precarious kingdom of impotence and deceit, until Saladin cleansed the city of the lees of Europe, which had been drained into it—for in every stream the sands of gold are few to the grains of dross—and down to the present annual overflow of Jerusalem with the refuse of south-eastern Europe, and European Asia, the mass of Christians in Jerusalem have been the indelible stain upon the name they assume.

I speak merely of the fact, and strongly; because every man must feel strongly in Jerusalem. I do not quarrel with the poor old Bulgarian that he was not a man. I make no other complaint than that of disgust. If Jerusalem were nearer Europe or America, it would be different, at least it would be more decent, from the higher character of the population. But going up to Jerusalem as to the holiest city of the purest faith, you are disappointed by what you see of that faith there, as you would

be upon approaching a banquet of wit and beauty, to find it a festival of idiots and the insane.

The only visible Protestant effort in Jerusalem is the English chapel upon Mount Zion. It is not liable to the same objections as the church of the Holy Sepulchre. It is small, new, and of unexceptionable ecclesiastical architecture, and its main impression is that of the Rev. Dr. Duck's cravat namely: snowy decorum. It is maintained by the joint efforts of England and Prussia, and its ministrations are directed to the conversion of the Jews. The tribes of Israel are gathered into the fold at the rate of six, and in favorable years, eight, converts per annum.

I went into the chapel one afternoon, but what relation the frigid system propounded by a very clean phantom in the pulpit, to a very clean congregation of phantoms in the pews, enjoyed to the simple and sublime humanity of the Christian teachings, was not stated.

We returned from the church of the Sepulchre, through the silent streets, and sat upon the housetop until the stars were fading. The air was balmy as south winds in May. Perfect silence brooded over the innumerable little domes of the houses. And, when the call to prayer trembled from the

minaret of Omar, our muezzin of the daybreak was Isaiah, and these his wailing words:

"Thy silver is become dross; thy wine mixed with water."

XII.

THE DEAD SEA.

Golden Sleeve appeared one morning, arrayed in the arsenal, and, muttering something about "*bad people*," announced that the horses were saddled for the excursion to Jordan and the Dead Sea.

You are still likely to fall among thieves, going down to Jericho, and the only safety is in being robbed before you start, by purchasing permission of the Arabs. The tribes that haunt the hill country near Jerusalem, are not entirely friendly toward each other; but, by retaining a shekh of one of the most powerful among them, you insure tolerable security for the excursion.

The shekh Artoosh, who awaited us at the foot of the Mount of Olives—for a Bedoueen fears to enter the city, whose very walls his stern wilderness chafes—was the ideal Bedoueen. He had the arched brow, the large, rich, sad and tender eyes, which are peculiar to the Orient, and which painters aim to give to pictures of Christ. It was the most beautiful and luminous eye I have ever seen. The other features were delicate, but full of force, and

the olive transparency of his complexion set his planet-like eyes, as evening light the stars. There was that extreme elegance in his face, and in the supple grace of his movement which imagination attributes to noblemen, and which is of the same quality as the refinement of a high-bred Arabian horse.

He wore, over a white robe, a long mantle of black goat's hair cloth, and his head was covered with the true Bedoueen head-dress—a Mecca handkerchief, or small shawl, of cloth of gold, with red borders and a long rich fringe. This is folded once, and laid smoothly upon the head. One end falls behind, between the shoulders, showering the fringe about the back; and the other is carried forward, over the right shoulder, and caught up upon the left cheek, so half shielding the face, like the open vizor of a helmet. A double twist of goat's hair cord, binding the shawl smoothly, goes around the head, so that the top of it is covered only with the gold.

Picture under this, that mystic complexion of the desert, steep it all in Syrian light, and you have what only the eastern sun can show. Mark, too, the shekh's white mare—valued, even there, at purses equal to a thousand dollars, and on whom he moves as flexibly as a sunbeam on the water.

We skirted the Mount of Olives, on the way to Bethany. In a quarter of an hour we were in the hill-wilderness—the mountains that separate the valley of the Jordan from the plain of the sea. Our path was a zigzag way upon the slope. There are no houses or gardens, and Bethany, lying blighted in a nook of the hills, is only beautiful because she lived there, who loved much. A few olive-trees and blossoming vines linger, like fading fancies of greenness and bloom, along the way. A few Arabs pass, with guns and rusty swords. You feel that you are in a wild country, where the individual makes his own laws.

Artoosh, like our shekh of the desert, was accompanied by an older dignitary, a kind of grand vizier, perhaps, or genius of the army. In narrow passes of the road, throats and gorges of the hills, overhung by steep cliffs, the vizier rode forward and surveyed the position, gun in hand, and finger on the trigger. Several times he rode back to Artoosh, and, after a low council, they gallopped off together, and reappeared upon the hills beyond riding around corners of the rock, and into bushy places, where foes might lurk. But it was quite their affair. We were only passengers, and watched their beautiful riding with unmingled delight in its grace, and went musing and singing along, in the

monotonous noonlight, as in the safe solitude of a city.

Sunset showed us, from the brow of the mountains, the plain of the Jordan. Far away, upon the other side, it was walled by the misty range of the Moab. Utter silence brooded over the valley—and a silence as of death. No feeling of life saluted our gaze. From the Alps, you look southward into the humming luxuriance of Italy, and northward into the busy toil of Switzerland, and the Apennines are laved with teeming life. But of all valleys that I had ever beheld from mountain-tops, this was the saddest. Not even the hope of regeneration into activity dawned in the mind. I was looking down into the valley of the Shadow of Death.

Upon the brow of the mountain where we stood, tradition indicates the spot of the Temptation. The Rev. Dr. Duck was not at hand to destroy the identity, and I was willing to believe. We descended rapidly into the plain, and the camp was pitched among the green shrubs and trees that overhung a stream. It was Elisha's brook that ran sweet and clear, just behind our tent.

It was a wild night. The heat was deadly, and the massive mountains rose grimly before us, as if all fair airs were forever walled away. The sky was piled with jagged clouds. Occasional showers

pattered upon the tents, and keen lightning angrily flashed, while low, dull thunder was hushed and flattened in the thick air. None of us slept. It was a weird and awful night.

A lurid dawn reddened over the valley. The leaden clouds caught the gleam upon their reef-like edges, but folded over again, into deeper blackness. They clung, affrighted, to the mountains, which were only a mysterious darkness in the dawn. A mocking rainbow spanned the blind abysses, and the east was but a vast vapor, suffused with crimson luminousness. The day was fateful and strange, and glared at us, vengeful-eyed, like a maniac. We were in a valley, a thousand feet below the Mediterranean. The Dead Sea had infected it with death. This was the spirit and gloom of the sea, without its substance. Thus it would compel the very landscape and atmosphere to its appalling desolation, before it overflowed it with its water.

Through the vague apprehension of that supernatural morning, I heard the gurgling song of the little brook of Elisha, flowing clear and smooth out of the dark mountain region, and threading that enchanted silence with pleasant sound. I ran to it, and leaped in, and drank of the water. But the red-eyed morning scorned me as I lay in that sweet

embrace, and moaning muttered thunders rehearsed the dreary day.

The tents were struck. Artoosh, shekh of shekhs, leaped into his saddle, and the beautiful mare paced slowly away from the camp, and led us toward Jericho. The little stream called after me, rilling cool music through the leaves—softer ever, and farther, until I heard it no more.

The path wound among the bushes upon the plain. A few large rain-drops fell with heavy distinctness upon the leaves. No birds sang, as they sing all day in dead, sunny Jerusalem. There were no houses, no flocks, no men or women. We came to a grain tract, that waved luxuriantly to the horses' bellies, and out of the grain, upon a little elevation, arose a solitary ruined tower.

It was the site of Jericho—the City of Palms, as Moses called it—and, although desolate now, palms were seen in the year 700 by Bishop Arculf, and in 1102 by Sewulf, and the Crusaders found under them singular flowers, which they called Jericho roses.

We saw no roses nor palms. We saw only a cluster of sad stone hovels, and wan-eyed men stared at us like spectres from the doors, and the scene was lonely and forlorn. Yet near one hovel a group of young fig-trees was blossoming, as fairly

as ever the figs and roses could have blossomed in the gardens of Jericho, before the seven rams were yeaned, and Joshua was a beardless boy, in Israel's camp by the Red Sea.

The elevation upon which stands the tower commands the plain, and a more memorable or remarkable landscape seen under such a sky is nowhere beheld.

The vast reach of the plain lay silent and shadowed, as in early twilight, from the gleaming level of the Dead Sea on the south to the mountains that closed the valley upon the north. Westward lay the hills of Judea, and to the east the Moab mountains. Lower lines of nearer eastern hills rolled and curved before us. Over all hung the lurid sky. Vague thunder still shook the awed hush of morning, and far over the Dead Sea, into the dense blackness that absorbed at the south its burnised water, fiery flashes darted. Glimpses of pallid blue sky struggled overhead in the crimson vortex of vapor, and died into the clouds. Upon the tops of all the bushy trees near us sat solemn-eyed eagles and vultures, silent with fixed stare, like birds of prey dismally expectant.

We rode quietly forward, lost in strange reveries. The plain, as we advanced, was level but barren. Tufted shrubs of impotent growth, as if shrinking

from the spell that blights the region, desolated it the more. Austere and scriptural figures thronged the morning. Chiefest Joshua, who utterly destroyed the City of Palms, sparing—of all its inhabitants, and when herds and cattle were slain—only the harlot Rahab.

Yet along the enchanted plain glided other and stately figures. Not only was the reverent eye searching the monotonous line of the Moab hills for probable Pisgh, but the human heart remembered that Marc Antony gave all this country to Cleopatra. Sweet and warm was that remembrance, last and farthest eastern trace of the "most sweet queen," and long lingering that day.

But suddenly, like those who descry life in the midst of death, we saw the green trees that fringe the Jordan, and the whole party bounded at full speed over the plain.

Beautiful, bowery Jordan! Its swift, turbid stream eddied and fled through the valley, defying its death with eager motion, and with the low gurgling song of living water. It is very narrow—not more at that season than a hundred feet wide, and it has channelled a deep bed in the soft earth, so that you do not see it until you stand on the very verge of the bank. Balsam poplars, willows, and oleanders lean over it, shrinking from the inexorable plain behind,

clustering into it with trembling foliage and arching it with green, as if tree and river had sworn forlorn friendship in that extremity of solitude.

Beautiful, bowery Jordan! Yet you are sad as you stand dipping your feet in its water—sad as you watch this brave son of Lebanon rushing, tumultuously triumphant, like a victor in the race—rushing and reeling with terror and delight, and in a moment to be hushed and choked in the bosom of the neighboring sea—your eyes rove from the water to the trees that overhang it, with almost a human sympathy, and those trees are figures as lithe and pensive to your imagination as the daughters of Babylon who wept hopelessly by other waters.

So leave it singing under trees in your memory forever. And when in after days you sit, on quiet summer Sundays, in the church, and hear the story of the Baptism, the forms around you will melt in the warm air—and once more those trees will overlean, once more those waters sing, and the Jordan, a vague name to others, shall be a line of light in your memory.

Artoosh turned to the south, and away from the river which bends toward the Moab mountains. We rode for an hour over the soft, floor-like, shrub-dotted plain, and to the shore of the Dead Sea.

It lay like molten lead, heavily still under the clouds: a stretch of black water gleaming under muttering thunder. Its shores are bare mountain precipices. No tree grows upon the bank; no sail shines upon the sea; no wave or ghostly ripple laps the beach, only dead drift-wood is strewn along the shore. No bird flew over, even the wind had died away. Moaning thunder only was the evidence of life in nature. My horse stooped to the clear water, but did not drink. It was a spot accursed. Did Cain skulk along this valley, leaving Abel in the field?

Yet it is not the desolation of pure desert which girds the Dead Sea, and that is its awfulness. Here are noble landscape-forms, and upon the plain fertility and possible cultivation. It is not the spell of death, but of insanity. The aspect is not so much of dead features, as of those whence soul has departed.

Here, when Moses looked down from those mountains, basked a gracious land flowing with milk and honey. Proud were its cities, sweet the shadow of the pomegranate and the palm. The pageant of an unknown life was here, but it disappeared before history. And you, to-day, can see the outline of that landscape, but ghostly now and grim.

We tasted the water; it is inconceivably bitter

and salt. Sea-water is mild in the comparison. None of us bathed. Not alone the stickiness and saltness, but a feeling of horror repelled me. Haply the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah, shaped as incredible monsters, haunt those depths. I believed the quaint old legend—"And if a man cast iron therein, it will float on the surface; but if men cast a feather therein, it will sink to the bottom."

We lay for an hour upon the shore, chatting with Artoosh, whose soft eyes sparkled with delight at our efforts to comprehend what he said—dreaming dreams, and wondering if the women of Sodom were fair, and the men of Gomorrah brave, and if there were caustic irony upon female curiosity in that earliest romance, the story of Lot, in which it is so hard that the natural yearning of a woman's heart toward her old home and her old gossips should meet a fate so stern—and whether the saltness of the Dead Sea was not Lot's wife in solution—and then Volney's sneer mocked my reverie, that, as Lot's wife was changed into salt, she must have melted in the next winter's rains.

My musing eyes suddenly beheld a vast congregation upon the distant shore.—"The unhappy people flying from the cities," I carelessly reflected; for I think if the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah themselves had slowly risen from the sea, and with

sparkling battlements and spires, and all the hum of life, had drifted over the water into the black cloud of distance, I should not have marvelled much on that bewitched morning.

But the eyes of Artoosh kindled at the sight, and, pointing with his finger, he called to us eagerly, "*Hadji*, *Hadji*, (pilgrims, pilgrims)."

We mounted and galloped around the beach toward the crowd. It was a vast company of Greek pilgrims, who had been to the Jordan to dip in the sacred water the shrouds they had bought in Jerusalem, and which they would carry home with them, and preserve for their burial. They made an immense cavalcade or caravan, with which we concluded to return to Jerusalem. Most of the pilgrims were upon foot, and in every variety of costume, of which the European was the most graceless and undignified, and they were all carrying away a bottle of the precious Jordan water.

We ascended the rugged mountain-side, directly from the Dead Sea. Through the vistas of yellow precipice I saw, for a long time, the line of black stillness; but the spell was gradually dissolved.

We rode busily about among the motley crowd of our new companions, undertaking impossible conversations with every masculine face that inter-

ested, and with every gentle pilgrim who appeared propitious.

At intervals upon the table-lands the Bedoueen dashed off, fleet as the wind, and graceful as the grain it bends, in their game of throwing the jereed or lance, and so regaled us with Arabian sham fights. Then we saw the supple and wonderful horsemanship of the Bedoueen. Part of the animal they rode, they governed his movement by their own. The wild grace of the spectacle was poetic and exhilarating. It was the sport of Centaurs. It was a romance of Antar and of Ez-zahir.

Thus whiling away the day over the barren mountains and long plains, upon which little lived but a few flocks, and which were dotted with the black tents of the Arabs — we fell at length into the road near Bethany.

Another cavalcade met us here, coming out from Jerusalem to welcome home the pilgrims. Among the rest, in the snuffy neighborhood which they affected, I saw Wind and Shower, not weeping profusely, with burning candles, but smiling, upon gay horses, in sympathy with the Bulgarian style of believers.

But when I saw our old friend Peach Blossom, whom I had left in a tomb at Thebes, riding gal-

lantly forward between two of the Maccaboy friars, and smiling with exhilaration, I felt that his hope "to catch the spirit of the East" had been, religiously speaking, fulfilled.

We all filed around the base of the Mount of Olives, a goodly company in the late twilight, and as I watched the multitude swarming by the points of the road, more easily my fancy saw the deluge of Crusaders flowing upon Jerusalem.

The weird gloom of the morning had passed away. The round, yellow moon hung over the ruined convent of the Mount of Olives, as we paused at the gate of the garden of Gethsemane. There Artoosh took leave of us. The dreary and lonely landscape, which lies among remembered landscapes, as the Dead Sea among waters, was the constant scene of his life. I did not wonder then at the soft sadness of his eye, and at his infrequent speech. There was wild and inscrutable romance in his whole existence. Our hands grasped in farewell, and the extremes of life touched. In me the farthest west thrilled with admiration and sympathy for the deepest east. In his lambent eye flashed the light of sweet surprise at the recognition.

Artoosh waited, sitting motionless upon his beautiful white mare, until we had passed the brook

Kedron, and were climbing the hill toward the gate of the city. Then he turned slowly and alone toward the desert, and disappeared in the melancholy moonlight.

XIII.

ADDIO KHADRA.

Leisurlie was playing upon his concertino the exquisite trio from Don Giovanni, and in the deep enjoyment of the best music in an unmusical land, I felt the wisdom of Lady Georgiana Wolff in bringing her piano over the desert to Jerusalem.

Golden Sleeve entered with a significant smile, and announced the venerable Armenian.

The Howadji instantly assumed the gravity becoming great Moguls, and the old gentleman entered. We rose and conducted him to the sofa, and he naturally fell into the cross-leggedness of oriental sitting. But observing that our feet touched the floor, he endeavored secretly to untwine his own legs, and to pay us the delicate compliment of yielding to our Frankish prejudices, in sitting as we sat.

The commander bustled about, grandiloquent with importance; for he was to interpret the conversation.

The Pacha, with gravity and safety, commented upon the weather.

—"It was a beautiful day."

"By the grace of God it was," was the affable reply, which made it a very pretty conversation as it stood.

Leisurlie then suggested, in rather a general manner—

"*Täib, täib*, (good, good)."

The venerable visitor smiled, and retorted—

"*Täib kateir*, (very good)."

A pause naturally ensued, yet I was not discouraged. It seemed to me that the visit and the conversation were advancing as favorably and much in the same manner, as other morning calls I remembered, and I rubbed my hands with satisfaction as if delectable news had been broached.

Meanwhile, Golden Sleeve had disappeared, to return with chibouques and to order coffee, and we sat blandly smiling upon our guest and upon each other—while the old gentleman surveyed our apartment, and took up a gilt-bound book, a gay pen-wiper, and other little objects of a traveller's table, which he examined with great interest, and pronounced—

"*Täib kateir.*"

He then propounded an inquiry in choice Arabic,

very slowly and distinctly, and very loudly, as if we were all deaf. Not having the faintest idea of what was asked, we smiled blandly again, but said nothing. Upon a repetition of the question, however, as in our parley with the guards at the gate of the city, we undertook a speech in parts, like a catch.

Leisurlie, with a beaming smile, commenced—

"*La*, (no)."

I ventured as before—

"*Bukara*, (to-morrow)."

And the sententious Pacha gravely concluded with,

"*Kooltooluk*."

Which is a very terrible oath.

The Armenian smiled, evidently perceiving that we were thrusting in the dark, and we all relapsed into smiling silence, until the commander returned with pipes and coffee.

Then it suddenly occurred to Leisurlie that having this private opportunity of conversation with an oriental gentleman, it behooved him to charge his mind with such political and general information upon the East as he could obtain from our friend. And he probed him upon the political side.

Alas! the old gentleman's information was an

apple of Sodom, tasteless and juiceless. In fact, he knew nothing about the "Eastern Question." And no happier was the result of the other general inquiries with which gentlemen of different parts of the world consider it their duty to perplex each other.

Leisurlie regained his beaming smile, as he discovered there was no hope of authentic information upon any subject, and in his grateful gladness of heart, he proposed that the venerable white beard of our guest should be incensed—a delicacy of hospitality exclusively oriental. The wise men of the East, using the advantages which custom secures to them, have a pleasant way of clapping hands when bearded visitors arrive, and order slaves to bring chafing-dishes heaped with burning gums, of which the odor escapes through holes in the lid of the vessel, and which, held under the beard, imparts a perfume that lingers for several days after. It is no more than a just homage to that manly ornament, of which we western men of razors have no adequate idea.

I commend the reflective reader to the quaint story of the beard of St. Nicephorus, as illustrating the eastern reverence for that appendage. It is told by Maundrell, who relates that Nicephorus was a person of the most eminent virtue, but the endow-

ments of his mind were not properly manifested in his beard, for, in fact, he had none at all. "Upon occasion of which defect, he fell into a deep melancholy."

The devil stepped in at this juncture, as usual, with offers of assistance upon the signature of that little bond wherewith he takes security. But the saint repelled the overture, although with ardent longings for the beard, and seizing the downy tuft upon his chin—"for he had, it seems, beard enough to swear by"—to witness his firm resolution, lo! the hair stretched with "the pluck he gave it;" and "as young heirs (did the reverend chronicler intend a pun?) that have been niggardly bred, generally turn prodigals when they come to their estates, so he never desisted from pulling his beard till he had drawn it down to his feet!"

But just as we were about consulting Golden Sleeve as to the probable presence of the chafing-dish in the house, our visitor rose and took leave, inviting us most cordially to return his visit; which invitation, we, remembering Khadra, most cordially accepted—chorussing "*täib kateir*," as the venerable beard disappeared.

The next morning led us to the Armenian convent. It is full of great riches The doors of sundry cabinets are of mother-of-pearl and tortoise-

shell, and through such, I had no doubt, we should pass into the presence of Khadra.

Golden Sleeve ushered us up broad flights of steps, until we reached the spacious, sunny roof of the building. The doors of various apartments opened upon it, and at one of them the commander stopped. It was opened immediately. A square little room was revealed, and the divan around the walls was apparently covered with bundles of choice and glittering silks and gold stuffs, which presently moved, however, and proved to be a party of Smyrniote Armenians paying a call.

The smile of the old man welcomed us, and we saluted the bales of silk and satin as we entered. The Smyrniotes all rose, and clustering together in gorgeous confusion, rolled like a brilliant cloud around the room, and then swept out of the door. Nor shall I ever know if there were a beautiful face among them.

But seeing the Armenian mamma, I bowed low and said—remembering her Italian capabilities—

"*Fa bello oggi, signora,* (It is a pleasant morning, madam)."

"*Si, non capisco, signore,* (Yes, sir, I don't understand,)" fell naturally from her lips.

They were the last words I ever addressed as conversation to the Armenian mother. But we renew-

ed with the old gentleman the exciting themes of yesterday, and complacently sat silent in our own smoke.

There was nothing in the room but the divan, and a scant strip of carpet before it. But it was sunny and cheerful, and the Armenian mother looked as maternal as any other. Presently, the father summoned a slave and dispatched him from the room, and a moment after, the dreamy eyes were looking in at the door, and the beautiful Khadra entered.

In truth, a houri; for, upon a glittering salver, she offered us the delicate conserves which only the orientals — those honey-loving epicureans — know As the thick transparency melted upon my tongue, I saw only her richly humid eyes, and in the rose of Persia which flavored those sweets, I tasted but her glances.

I drew from my pocket the flower she had dropped in the church, and unobserved of the others, pressed it to my lips. A sudden light of remembrance and recognition flashed in her eyes, but it faded instantly into their usual moonlike dreaminess.

She passed to the others, and I marked the elaborate richness of her dress, and with the extremest satisfaction. Because brilliant and glowing stuffs, gems, and flowers, and gold, are the happy hints in nature of that supreme human beauty to which in-

stinct directly attaches them wherever it appears. And so in the famous portaits of the world are the beautiful women arrayed. The Arabian poets are right when they clothe their heroines in magnificence, and enshrine them in garden pavilions. So under birds of Paradise melting in lustrous heavens, and under the luxuriant splendor of tropical trees, should the lover steal, enchanted, to that bower, and pressing aside opposing flowers, whose souls, by that pressure, exhale in passionate odors to his brain,—look in upon his love.

—"But a simple white muslin and a rose?"—

Ah! Traddles, they are sweet and pretty, and they suit the "dearest girl." But the eastern beauty is another glory than the pale sweetness of your blonde.

Khadra went out, and returned with sherbet. I touched her finger as I took my glass,—I drained it, and in my cup, her beauty was the melted pearl.

She was silent as a phantom. When she had performed the graceful services of hospitality, she sat in a corner, where the sunlight streamed all over her and looked at me with the large eyes. Gazelle-eyes, perhaps, the poets would have called them, not so much because the eyes of gazelles are intrinsically very beautiful, but because every association

with the animal is so graceful and delicate, so wild and unattainable.

The Pacha rose, but I lingered. I was loth to lose that strain of the Eastern poem. I lingered—but turning, slowly followed the Pacha, and that vision follows me forever.

Artoosh forever rides away in the Syrian moonlight,—and after the *bon giorno* is said to the mother, and the last smile is lighting the pleasant face of the old Armenian,—Khadra stands in the sunshine of Jerusalem, looking at me as if the world were a dream, while I press the faded flower to my lips, and look, but do not murmur,—

—"Addio Khadra."

XIV.

COMING AWAY.

"The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.

"The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines, with the tender grape, give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away."

So we sang with Solomon as a soft spring day led us out of the gate of Jerusalem. Our route lay northward toward Damascus, and we paused on the stony way looking back upon the holy city, from the point whence Mary and her child, coming from Nazareth, first beheld it.

It is, perhaps, the finest view of Jerusalem. The broad foreground of olive groves narrows into the gorge of the valley of Jehoshaphat, and the gentle rise of the city from Mount Moriah to Mount Zion, reveals the mass of domes and roofs relieved by an infrequent minaret, and based in the green groves of the mosque of Omar. The eye clings to the aerial elegance of the dome, and tries

to fashion the architectural splendors which flashed from that very spot upon the eyes of the Nazarenes.

Then returned the same vision which had greeted our approach,—the dream of gardens, terraces, and palaces, and the clustering magnificence of a metropolis. But it vanished while we gazed. The solemnity and sadness of the landscape oppressed us with their reality. For the traveller must still feel that if the Lord once especially loved the land, it has now only the bitter memory, not the radiant presence, of that favor.

The day saddened as we advanced into a dreary country. It rolled around us in rocky hills. There were no houses, no people. It is a landscape without grandeur, but monotonously dreary. The camp was pitched at sunset by the fountain at which Mary, returning to Nazareth, discovered that her son had tarried in Jerusalem.

The next day, as we came into a richer region, Mary was still the mournful figure that haunted imagination. The landscape even to-day sympathizes with her, and its silence hushes and subdues your thoughts. Elected of the Lord to bear his child, she, the favored of women, should yet taste little maternal joy,—should feel that he would never be a boy, and, with such sorrow as no painter has

painted and no poet sung, know that he must be about his father's business.

The Roman church, however, which clings with such natural and tender piety to the image of the Madonna, has fostered many a picture in which artistic imagination restores to Mary all that the human heart desires. I remember in one of the small rooms of the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, a little painting representing the mother, young and fair, sitting in a pleasant room and sewing. She is looking up with maternal fondness at the young Jesus, who comes running in, a beautiful boy, and holds up to her a passion-flower.

But not in any pleasant room to Mary sewing and smiling, did her child truly show the passion-flower, but here at the fountain of El Bir, in the Syrian twilight, when she discovered that he had tarried in Jerusalem.

As you go northward from Jerusalem, the loneliness of the country is oppressive. Grain waves in all the valleys. Olives and figs abound, but there are no scattered houses, only little villages, stern masses of gray stone upon high points, whose air and position are warlike. There are few figures in the landscape, and they pass with guns and stare strangely, nor always with a greeting. There are no proper roads in Palestine, only miserably stony

paths, along which the water runs in rainy days. Often the broad sweep of grain is beautiful. But so spacious a landscape is always sad, if unrelieved by some feature humanly sympathetic.

—"That we shall find in the town of Nablous," I said to Leisurlie, as we quietly eat our dates and alighted at the well of Jacob, which lies finely at the opening of the valley of Nablous. The church, which the Empress Helena erected over it, has now, with the exception of four columns, happily disappeared, and it lies open to the blue sky and the bare mountains.

This Empress Helena, the mother of the Emperor Constantine, is also the mother of most of the church traditions and of the churches themselves in Palestine. It was she who discovered the true cross, and went up and down the country finding nails, and footprints, and blood, and milk, and other consolations for the half-idolatrous feeling of the church which canonized her.

I say half-idolatrous, because, although the interest in relics is very intelligible, and every man would be glad to have an original manuscript page of Shakespeare—yet the religious appeal through relics rather than symbols, when addressed to an unrefined and unspiritual nature, is sensual and not spiritual. The fact is lost in the form. The Roman

peasant kneeling before the statue of Jupiter, which now stands for St. Peter, in his church at Rome, does really worship that identical bronze, as any spectator by observation and conversation may discover—although he is taught by the Church that the statue is only a representation. But deeply as his mind is moved by the statue, when his eyes, and hands, and forehead are touched by the actual bones of a saint, does any man doubt that he ascribes to them, *per se*, a direct influence upon his spiritual condition?

The Empress Helena was recently emancipated from Paganism, and regarded the new faith in a pagan spirit. The traveller gets very tired of her doings in Palestine, feeling, as he must feel, that, although a Romish saint, she was very little of a Christian, if measured by any other than the external standards. He is quite able to believe the artless story of the guides at Jerusalem—that Helena sought everywhere for the cross but vainly, until, "after spending a great deal of money, she found the true cross."

Many are the modern travellers who tread closely in the path of the empress, anxious to see the footprints and nails, writing huge volumes upon the authenticity of localities, and losing, like most other critics, the spirit in the science.

It is not necessary to the satisfaction of Syrian travel, to settle the disputed points of position and tradition. The great points are forever settled. Jerusalem, the Jordan, Nazareth, and Bethlehem, and, in general, the whole country. Why vex your mind with the study of the surprising erudition that has been lavished upon the question whether the Calvary chapel in the church of the Sepulchre is the identical spot of the crucifixion —knowing, as you do, that here, in or around Jerusalem, Christ was crucified? The surprising erudition displayed will forever forbid the solution of the question. And even were this spot determined to be the true one, after a single glance of reverence and curiosity, you would not willingly look again upon the tawdry disfiguration of the place.

To a man of thought and just religious feeling, it is the contemplation of the landscape and of all the external local influences with which Jesus Christ conversed, which is the true point of interest in the Holy Land. The curiosity that hunts the shape, and size, and direction of his footprints, is far from the sympathy of reverence. It is natural to a certain degree, and honorable. But pushed to furious dispute and elaborate research, it becomes petty and wearisome.

—Is it suggested that it strengthens the evidences of Christianity?

But, on the other hand, does Christianity require any such evidences as this?

—Is it thought to influence the authenticity of the narratives?

But is not the essential substance of those narratives entirely independent of localities?

In any case these decisions must all be speculative and relative. It is only quarrelling with great agony of argument, whether the robe of an emperor was edged with red or purple—and some ingenious commentator suddenly breaks in with the theory that the emperor had no robe at all.

In Palestine, as elsewhere in the world, wherever the peculiar aspects of the climate, the landscape, and the life of the people harmonize with tradition it is better to believe than to doubt. The Rev. Dr Duck was dissatisfied with the identity of the tomb of Lazarus, because of the reason already related. On the other hand, the situation of Bethany and the general character of tombs at that period once ascertained, it was not unfair to suppose, for obvious reasons, that tradition had cherished the precise locality. It was simply easier to believe than to disbelieve. And the Pacha feared that the secret

of the Rev. Dr. Duck's incredulity lay in the fact that the tradition was "Romish."

If this itching wish to thrust your finger in the hole in the side, haunts you constantly—look up and look around you. These are the same eternal sky and mountains his eyes beheld. Whether he suffered here or there—whether this is Pontius Pilate's house or not—whether this is the Via Dolorosa or some other street, you know not, and can never know. If your faith relies in the slightest degree upon that order of testimony, behold your house is built upon the sand, and the rains of curiosity will fall upon it, and the winds of speculation will blow against it, and the floods of erudition will sweep it utterly away.

Sitting by the well of Jacob, you are lost in speculation, why, of the two faiths born in the East —Islam and Christianity—the one cannot flourish away from its birth-place, while the other withers and dies there.

So we sat and mused, looking up the beautiful valley of Sychar, between the mountains Ebal and Gherizim. The well lies at the confluence of this valley with the plain. Its mouth is very small, and is elevated but the height of a stone or two above the level of the ground. We rode up the beautiful valley. The bases of the mountains are terraced,

and fine gardens fringe the stream, which flows between, and the town of Nablous, the old Sychar, promises richly to the eye.

It is famous for hating Christians, and is the scene of poet Harriet's millet-martyrdom. "I had three slaps in the face from millet stalks." The interior breaks the promise of the distant view. It is unutterably filthy and disagreeable; and yet, as you stumble through its streets, you can well believe that God loved the elders of children, who are still beautiful, although they do give you "three slaps in the face" with millet stalks, and throw stones at you from behind doors and corners.

At Nablous I first felt the Syrian beauty. Deep, rich, dreamy eyes haunted the air. The children stood in gay costumes by the broken fountains, holding their vases of water upon their shoulder, as did the woman of Samaria, and not upon the head, as in the South. They turned and wondered; they shrank, and veiled their faces, then glided like ghosts, away.

A storm besieged us in Nablous, and a fellow-Christian, of the Armenian persuasion, secured us for his fleas, during the time we remained. We housed in a huge chamber, upon the floor of which were spread our mats and carpets. It was only a large, damp, and dirty room, opening upon a roof

whence we could see Gherizim, and a few palms, and watch for a break in the clouds.

They broke—the sun burst through, and led us to walk. Remain in that damp and dirty room at Nablous, when you are there, until the sun will be your cicerone. None other shows Nablous as he.

Sunken in lush foliage, it is a more Italian Sorrento:

> "Save that there was no sea to lave its base,
> But a most living landscape."

Seen from the mountain-side, its masses of broken walls, arches, minarets, domes, and gardens, swarming with orange, lemon, pomegranate, fig, almond, and olive trees, make Nablous read to the eye as an Arabian poem to the ear.

We reached a picturesque fountain near the gate of the city, and pushing under archways, through a way that more resembled a sewer than a street, we climbed steep, broken stone steps, to the Jews' synagogue. It is the seat of the old Samaritans—the most Jewish of Jews, of whom, at Nablous, they declare only a hundred are now living in the world. A white-bearded old man showed us the venerable copy of the Law, which has come down from some marvellous antiquity; they call it three thousand five hundred years old. It is a roll of old

parchment; but I saw less of its yellow complexion than of the golden-hued faces that were peeping at us through the open dome grating of the ceiling, but which, as I solemnly glanced upward, were hastily concealed, while bounding footsteps rang along the roof.

As we left Nablous the next day, and climbed across the mountain to old Samaria, now Sebaste, its remembrance returned to me, and remains, as of a beautiful garden, and, excepting Damascus, the most delicious spot to the eye in Syria.

XV.

ESDRAËLON.

We left Samaria behind.

I sat upon a column, under a palm-tree looking off upon the sea-like plain of Esdraëlon. An old woman in faded rags, and croning to herself, brought a little cup, into which she poured resin, and then kindled a flame. The incense mingled with the twilight coolness. She placed the burning cup in a tomb, and vanished, without looking at me.

The twilight darkened, and the yellow moon hung large over the hills where the Witch of Endor lived. A young girl stole out of the town, bearing a taper, and gathering the veil closer around her face, as she saw the figure of a man and a Giaour. She drew from her robe a delicate vase, and, filling it with incense, she lighted it, and placed it in a tomb. Then, regardless of me, she glided away, leaving me sitting upon the column, under a palm-tree, remembering the mighty story of that plain.

I was looking from the cemetery of Djneen, on the edge of the great plain of Esdraëlon, the famed

battle-field of the Old Testament, the most memorable field of history.

Your recollections as you contemplate that plain, are like visions of the night, they are so mighty, yet to you so unreal. In my dreams, as I looked, wonderful phantom hosts marshalled themselves upon the vague vastness of the plain over which snowy Hermon made Switzerland in the north, and green Tabor was a graceful Italy. The whirring rush of ghostly chariots announced the fate of Sisera; and Josiah, King of Judah, fell under a pitiless rain of Egyptian arrows. In vision, the Prophet Elisha fled along the plain, and the Leper-General of Damascus passed, going to wash in Jordan, and Saul, hidden in night, crept stealthily to the Witch of Endor. The Roman purple gleams through the moonlight, as Vespasian rides down the lines of his legions, and the fierce Crusaders swarm over the plain. Every nation famous in history, has encamped here, and here is yet to be fought that battle of Armageddon, which shall decide the future fate of the East.

This is the dowry of the plain of Esdraëlon to memory and imagination, as you contemplate it from the palace-ruins of Ahab at Djneen, and such is the history you would fancy for it, were all the records dumb.

For we love to associate great events with noble landscapes, and thus to assert the harmony between nature and man. The Nile voyager, even were the monuments lost in sand, and Egyptian history perished, would yet endow the shores of the mysterious river with the life, lore, and art of Egypt. Their final cause exists to the traveller's mind today, as to the Egyptian mind then; and surely not the least satisfaction of travel is the intellectual and moral perception of the traveller, revealing to him the reason and naturalness of the different achievements of different nations. This implies, of course, that there is not an essential and fatal difference in men, and that a Hoosier can understand an Arab, and an Esquimaux a Sicilian.

The proof lies in individual experience. Many a youth, musing upon the story of Greece and Rome, and then going to visit their remains, is secretly surprised at the want of strangeness in the impression they produce. He is not startled in the Forum. He is only pensive in the Coliseum. He is but solemnized at Aboo Simbel. It is not as if he had stepped into a dream, as he supposed it would be; but he feels a natural sympathy with the mighty ruins and the triumphant time they recall, as if he were visiting his own ancestral estates in another country.

But if the boy thus loses the excitement of wonder, the man gains a sweeter wisdom. His own experience explains to him the secret of Greece and Rome. The race is one—as in form, so in essence, the complexion differing. He perceives that all civilizations, and artistic, intellectual, and military achievements, are but blossoms of the same tree. It flowers in swart Egypt—in glowing Syria—in polished Greece—in red Rome—in fierce Huns and swift Goths—in wise England—in eager America; and he, youngest child of the race and of Time, stands beneath those spreading boughs and beholds the various splendor of the flowers flashing and fading, but all fed by the same life, and offering but a single beauty to the pensive eye of thought.

A perfect day broke over Esdraëlon. The great plain stretched, unmarked by villages or forests, or any sufficient forms of life, thirty miles in length and eighteen in breadth. Our way lay across it to the hills that skirted it to the north. They were the hills of Galilee.

In the sunrise we descended to the plain. It was brilliant with flowers, and with grain, and lay to the sun like a vast, fertile meadow. The snowy Hermon, in the deep blue distance, gave it dignity and grandeur. There was occasional ploughing, but the spectral husbandmen, who can never se-

cure their crops against the predatory Arabs, and the teams of camels and donkeys, only deepened the superb lifelessness of the flowery level, over which innumerable birds revelled in the morning air, as if to purify with song the interval between the fierce past and the fierce future, prophecied for the region. On the solitary plain it was not difficult to make the words of Deborah the refrain of their singing—"The highways were unoccupied: the inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel."

We, too, loitered idly over the mighty battle-field, singing. Assyrians, Jews, Gentiles, Saracens, Egyptians, Persians, Druses, Turks, Arabs, Crusaders, and Frenchmen had here fought through the dim centuries of history, and we American Howadji remained masters of the field. The very stars in their courses fought against Sisera in the shadow of yonder mountain, and we trotted leisurely along, humming *Vedrai carino.*

I shared, in that moment, the feelings of a young military scholar whom I once met in the cars going from Baden to Basle. A dreamy summer day flushed the landscape, and the father, telling end less battle-stories to stimulate his son's ardor, suddenly pointed out a monument to Marshal Turenne. We saw it vaguely as we darted by. But I marked

no kindling ambition in the boy-soldier's eye, only a gleam of satisfaction—as if it were better to be young, alive, and in the cars, than old, dead, and famous, like the Marshal Turenne.

Even so, Sisera and Saul, Josiah and Vespasian, were but ghosts glimmering in the radiant day. Their lives, and fightings, and deaths, were only themes of idle reverie in the intervals of singing. Happy the thought that distils one pure drop of wisdom from old history.

"O Allah!" said to me the graybeard merchant in the bazaar of Damascus—"what acres of roses have gone to this little vial of attar of rose!"

Yet as toward noon we neared the hills of Galilee, through the murky gleam of universal military glory which hung over the plain of Esdraëlon stole a more penetrant ray. Across the fiery flash of scimitars, and the crowd of hurtling arrows, and the glittering Roman eagles, a palm branch waved and hushed them into defeat. As we neared the hills of Galilee the resounding echo of arms died away, and in visions of the noon—surpassing those of twilight—triumphant among all those hosts, and subduing emperors, sultans, and kings, rode upon a donkey a greater than Solomon, a King crowned with thorns and sceptered with a palm branch.

XVI.

AVE MARIA!

As we entered the hills of Galilee, low, and bare, and stony, the mighty romance of the morning ended, and our minds were filled with a very humble story

We wound among the hills in silence, stumbling up one of the worst paths in Palestine, and, at length, quite in their heart, descended under trees upon a secluded and lovely valley. It was dotted with olive groves, and oaks, and pomegranates, with groups of Arabs, and camels, and horses, and occasional flocks. The same low, stony hills, like swelling, bare uplands, inclosed it, and in the depths of the valley, leaning against the mountains, and holding up to welcome us, a minaret, a few cypresses, and a palm, lay little, gray, flat-roofed Nazareth.

The valley was tranquil as a pastoral picture, and the rocky, steep hills were grim and melancholy. All the greener, therefore, were the trees, all the more gracious and significant the smooth pasture upon which the animals quietly grazed.

We descended into the valley with extreme satisfaction; for it is one of the places which satisfy imagination. Its seclusion and domesticity of aspect harmonize with the sentiment of the maternal instincts, and they are strong in your sympathy the day you come to Nazareth, for it is a day consecrate to the Madonna.

Over these hills she walked, the Virgin Nazarene, from the gray little village leaning upon the mountains. And as she paused by this fountain, filling her vase with water, even as yonder Nazarene girl is filling hers this afternoon; or, as fascinated by the thoughtful twilight, she strayed quite away from the little village, still she meditated the promise to some daughter of Israel, and returning at evening with thoughts stranger and brighter than the stars, wondered, and wondered again, "Can any good come out of Nazareth?"

As, descending into the plain, the words rose to my mind, the music of the convent bell came ringing down the valley. Sweet and strange was that music in the pensive silence of Palestine. It sang my thoughts to meditation, and my heart sang hymns, and preached of remembered days and places; June Sundays in country churches, to which we walked along the edges of fields, and under branching elms hushed in Sunday repose; the long

village road, with the open wagons and chaises, in which the red-handed farmers in holiday suits drove the red-cheeked family to the church door; the bare wooden church, full of daylight, with the square hole in the ceiling, through which the sexton looked to see if the parson were in the pulpit; the gray-haired minister, in his winter woollen gown, or summer silk one, and always with black gloves, slit in the middle finger that he might turn the leaves; the reading of the Bible, in a cheerful, sing-song tone, to which its choicest sentences always sing themselves now; the setting the tune with nasal psalmody, and the growling bass-viol, as if a hidden artist were playing upon a lazy lion; the long sermon, of which I faithfully remembered the text and forgot the drift, and in which the names of Galilee, and Mary, and Nazareth were sweet sounds only, filling my mind with vague imagery, whose outline has long since faded; the flowers, and the sunny hayfields breathing sweetly in at the open window, and all the sweeter when the parson read: "Yet I say unto you, Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these"; the people in the pews, all whose faces have vanished now, save hers, so many years my elder, yet still radiant with youth, queenly in beauty and in bearing, who came when all were seated following the old grandfather with powdered

hair and gold-headed cane, and who sat serene during the service, while I, an eight years' child, felt a vague sadness overshadow the sweet day, and quite forgot the sermon.

This was the music of the convent bell of Nazareth. In that calm Syrian afternoon, memory, a pensive Ruth, went gleaning the silent fields of childhood, and found the scattered grain still golden, the morning sunlight yet fresh and fair.

Troops of girls passed us as we came to the town. Their arms and hands were touched with kohl, they wore strings of pewter coins for necklaces, and their heads were girt with brilliant handkerchiefs. They did not veil their faces, and at times, from out the throng, great eyes rose bewilderingly upon our gaze. I saw many an eye in the Nazareth girls, whose light would have illuminated an artist's fame forever, could he have fixed it within the pictured face of his Madonna.

The traditions which cluster around Nazareth are so tender and domestic, that you will willingly believe, or at least you will listen to the improbable stories of the friars, as a father to the enthusiastic exaggerations of his child. With Jerusalem and its vicinity, the gravity of the doctrine is too intimately associated to allow the mind to heed the quarrels and theories about the localities. It is the grandeur

of the thought which commands you. But in Nazareth, it is the personality of the teacher which interests you. All the tenderness of the story centres here. The youth of the Madonna, and the unrecorded years of the child belong to Nazareth. Therefore imagination unbends to the sweet associations of domestic life. The little picture in the Uffizi recurs again, and the delicate sketches of Overbeck, illustrating the life of Christ, in which, as a blooming boy in his father's shop, he saws a bit of wood into the form of a cross, looking up smilingly to the thoughtful Joseph and the yearning Mary, as when he brings her the passion-flower in the pleasant room.

The tranquil afternoon streams up the valley, and your heart is softened, as if by that tender smile of Mary; and yielding to the soliciting friars, you go quietly and see where Joseph's house stood, and where the Angel Gabriel saluted Mary, and the chimney of the hearth upon which she warmed food for her young child, and baked cakes for Joseph when he came home from work, and the rock whence the Jews wished to cast Jesus, and another rock upon which he eat with his disciples.

You listen quietly to these stories, and look at the sights. The childish effort to give plausible form to the necessary facts of the history of the

place, is too natural to offend. When the pretence is too transparent, you smile, but do not scold. For, whether he lived upon this side of the way or upon that, this is the landscape he saw for thirty years. A quiet workman, doubtless, with his father, strolling among the melancholy hills of Galilee, looking down into the lake-like vastness of Esdraëlon, where the great captains of his nation had fought—hearing the wild winds blow from the sea—watching the stars, and remembering the three days of his childhood, when he sat in the temple at Jerusalem.

Walking in the dying day over the same solitary hills you will see in the sunset but one figure moving along the horizon—a grave manly form, outlined upon the west.

Here was the true struggle of his life—the resolve to devote himself to the work. These are the exceeding high mountains upon which he was lifted in temptation; here in the fullness of his youth and hope Satan walked with him, seductive. For every sin smiles in the first address, says Jeremy Taylor, and carries light in the face and honey in the lip. Green and flowery as Esdraëlon, lay the valleys of ease and reputation at his feet; but sternly precipitous, as the heights of Galilee, the cliffs of duty above him buried their heads in heaven.

Here, too, was he transfigured; and in the light of thought he floats between Moses and Elias, between faith and duty, and the splendor of his devotion, so overflows history with glory, that men call him God

XVII.

SUMMER.

—"Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness with pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense?"

In late April, in the vale of Zabulon, riding from pensive Nazareth in the mountains, to heroic Acre upon the sea, the triumphant pomp of the Syrian summer bursts upon you.

You cannot see the advent of that beauty upon a plain, or in a forest, or upon a hill, or along the sea-shore, alone. It is the combination of all which reveals it. Flowers set like stars against the solemn night of foliage—the broad plain flashing with green and gold, state livery of the royal year — the long grasses languidly over-leaning winding water-courses, indicated only by a more luxuriant line of richness—the blooming surfaces of nearer hills, and the distant blue mistiness of mountains, walls and bulwarks of the year's garden, melting in the haze, sculptured in the moonlight, firm as relics of a fore-world in the celestial amber of clear afternoons—it is only in this combination

of variety, through which, on a brilliant day, you pass over the vale of Zabulon, that you recognize the splendor of Syria.

But not the flute-sweetness of lawns and meadow lands alone; not the sombre bass of dark forests; not the stringed unison of gently-waving hills, nor the keen tone of a mountain outlined horizon can alone satisfy the imperial love of beauty—only the rhythmical assent of all completes the symphony of the Syrian year.

A bland presence it advances from the Caspian, perfumed with the rose-secrets of Cashmere, with the breath of lands watered by the Tigris, and of the gardens of the Euphrates. Following the sun with beauty, it smoothes the land into grace, bloom, and summer. Touching the snows of Lebanon, they become beautiful feet upon the mountains, running with glad tidings to the sea, and the year follows them, pausing upon the shore, and breathing balm far over the water.

In the vale of Zabulon, quickened by the fullness and ripeness of the unwithering warmth, penetrated with a sense of delight in the year, which not even Italy imparts, I recalled the words said to me in passing, years before, by a poet in New England—"What Syrian sunshine!"

It was the most delicate of June mornings, one

of those rare days with us, in which the sky charged with rosy light seems but an evanescent bloom upon the air, and, as we met upon a village common, overbreathed by blossoming apple orchards, the poet said, "What Syrian sunshine!"

The words haunted me. They expressed what I had vaguely felt of the summer. With the poet they were metaphor. With me they became a feeling. It ripened into desire. The East lay in my imagination, a formless glow, like a distant oleander bush in flower. I came to the garden, to the oleander, to the East. The glow was a burning beauty all around me. I plunged spurs into my horse and gallopped through the flowers, shouting, as if the poet in the cool New England village could hear me—"What Syrian sunshine!"

If you doubt, read Solomon's Song. That whole book is a summer lyric of Syria. The very sensuousness of the imagery reveals the voluptuousness of the impression. Yet how large, how rich, how suggestive! How it is forever the first of love-songs! To-day Solomon might lie upon a sunny side of Zabulon, and, wooing the landscape, sing that song anew. For strange as it appears of that most passionate of poems, it is Wordsworthian in its intense reality. The glow that permeates it is the inexpressible inspiration of the Syrian summer.

Advancing through the festal land, gladly wreathing the pensive image of Nazareth with these abounding flowers, you repeat that song as the only justice to your eye and heart. And you peal it a cheerful battle-cry against all the doubters—baring your brow to the summer as it deepens around you, and singing to it as Solomon sang to his beloved—

"Behold thou art fair, my love: behold thou art fair."—

XVIII.

ACRE.

We came to Acre, a little, dull, ruined old town on the very edge of the sea, which dashed against it in foaming breakers, that day.

It has been battered in all kinds of wars. In 1281 the Saracens thundered at its gates with sixty thousand cavalry, and a hundred and sixty thousand infantry. Richard Cœur de Lion reduced it. Ibrahim Pacha carried it by assault, and in 1840 it was destroyed by the explosion of it own magazine while the British fleet lay before it, bombarding. It has been taken many times—although Napoleon could not take it—and looks no longer worth the taking. The sea dashes upon it as upon an old hulk which it would gladly utterly destroy.

But still in Acre is an exquisite mosque, the mosque of Sultan Djezzar, a mosaic of fine marbles rising from cypresses and palms. Its dome is ruined by much bombarding; but a fountained kiosk upon a pavement shadowed by palms, and the airy arcade which surrounds the inclosure, like the gallery of a

cloister—except that this breathes of pleasure and not of meditation—give memory still a nucleus in Acre.

As we stroll about the ruined fortifications in the still noon, and look across the water to the misty headland which, braving the sea at the farther extremity of the crescent beach, nine miles away—Golden Sleeve tells us is Mount Carmel, we listen to the tradition which quaint Henry Maundrell tells of the convent of Acre.

When, after that turbulent thundering at the gates, the Saracens entered the city, the lady abbess of the nunnery fearing for herself and nuns the fate of houris, summoned them together as the enemy approached, and exhorted them to cut and mangle their faces, thus to quench in their own blood the lust of the conquerors. As she spoke she set them the example, and all the nuns inspired by her lofty courage, did likewise. And while they still stood bleeding and mangled, the soldiers burst into the convent, and mad with disappointment, immediately slew them all—"thus restoring them, as in charity we may suppose," says the grave and sweet chronicler, "to a new and inviolable beauty."

Another quaint old legend of Acre has the flavor of pure stoicism.

In the days of St. Louis, one of the monks en-

countered an old woman threading the streets of Acre with a cruse of water and a pan of coals. He asked her why she carried them. The water to extinguish hell, said she, and the fire to burn up Paradise, that then the selfishness of man may be subdued, and he may love God for himself alone.

The bazaars were busy in Acre. The life of the town was concentrated around the shops, which are called as gay as those of Aleppo, and the turbaned gossips with the slouching soldiery criticized the Howadji as they rode slowly out of the ruined little town.

The beach between Acre and Mount Carmel is not surpassed in my memory. Certainly none so spacious connects two points so variously famous.

The sea smoothed the crescent shore, and polished a black marble pavement for our going. The brilliant day was melting into the tenderness of evening light, but was still so soft and glowing that I could well fancy Palestine once more beloved of the Lord. All day we had seen Mount Carmel from Acre, hazy in the distance; and it was hard to feel, as we looked at it, galloping over the beach, that it was Elijah's mount, and that the sparkling sea was the same over which the boy saw the cloud of a hand's size gathering.

It was hard to feel this, because the Mediterranean had invaded the gravity of the Syrian journey, and the serious thoughts which it is impossible to escape among the hills of Galilee, were smothered in the flowers of Zabulon. The sea brought the vision and remembrance of other lands which it laved. The austere imagery of prophetic times melted in the glad day. Zabulon whispered—"Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these," and the vision of solemn-eyed prophets faded.

Moreover, the landscape of all famous stories has a character which the eye can never see. Even when you have stood upon Marathon, and have seen the mountains which look down upon it, imagination, despite memory, will still marshal the resounding hosts upon another plain than that. Herodotus, Josephus, Thucydides, Xenophon, first mould the images of their story in the plastic imagination of the boy, and no visible and possible landscape is vast enough to hold them. The great councils of Rome, the triumphs, the processions, and the fiery words which time has not chilled—these were not held, and seen, and spoken, in the forum whose ruins you have seen, but in some fair and eternal forum of the imagination. What Bermuda voyager has ever seen the "still vexed Bermoothes"—or who

ever felt the gray old olive grove on the shore of the Brook Kedron, to be the true Gethsemane?

And because Solomon's song had been the proem and the poem of the day, it was difficult to see in the hazy headland, like a point in Nicholas Poussin's landscapes, the Carmel of grim history.

We spurred along the beach upon the full run. Golden Sleeve dropped chibouque and kurbash, scrambled off his horse and on, and gave galloping chase. The Arabs swarmed after, wide-flying—as Homer would have sung—on the shore of the loud-sounding sea. The Pacha and I dashed ahead of the turbanned crew, Cœur de Lion and Philip Augustus before Saladin, the Crusaders before the Saracens.

—Or Julian and Maddalo, rather, who ran along the Lido shore of the same sea,—

> ———— "For the winds drove
> The living spray along the sunny air
> Into our faces; the blue heavens were bare,
> Stripped to their depths by the awakening North,
> And from the waves sounds like delight broke forth
> Harmonious with solitude, and sent
> Into our hearts aerial merriment."

I leaned over the neck of my horse, straining ahead. But in an instant I rolled upon the sand. The stirrup in which I was thoughtlessly hanging

my whole weight, broke, and I fell toward the sea, that laughed at me softly with inextinguishable laughter.

"*Kooltooluk!*" cried the Pacha, reining up.

My good Arabian stopped instantly, turned to look at me, and the next moment we were all wide-flying again, in the exhilarating air, Crusaders and Saracens, and the sun left us climbing Mount Carmel.

XIX.

SEA OF GALILEE.

A SHEET of dark-blue water among naked hills, is the Sea of Galilee. Only the dismal little town of Tiberias breaks the mournful monotony of the shore, from which the bold hills gradually recede higher and farther, to the snowy sublimity of Hermon.

We came over the mountains from Nazareth, and as we descended to the lake and saw the shattered walls of Tiberias with a few palms, sad and unhandsome in the wind, it seemed to me the most desolate and forlorn of towns. In 1835 an earthquake shook down the village, and the whole landscape has the sullen aspect of a volcanic region. We looked in vain upon the dead calmness of the lake's surface for any trace of the beautiful Jordan, which flows through it. Not a ripple disturbed its dream. Indeed, the profound solitude and mountainous sternness of the region, reminded me of the bewitched desolation of the Dead Sea. Here again the woe

denounced against the cities of the shore has blasted the sea.

With what melancholy curiosity the eye followed Golden Sleeve's finger toward the site of Capernaum.

The tent was pitched on the high bank over the lake, with the door toward Mount Hermon, upon which the dying day played wondrous symphonies to the eye. There was no sail or boat upon the lake, and we strolled into the town.

It was at Tiberias that Eothen attended the congress of fleas, and the filth and squalor of this chapel of ease to the holy city of Saffet in the mountains, do not belie their fame. The town is thronged with Flemish Jews who await here the coming of the Messiah, who will reign at neighboring Saffet, before going to Jerusalem. The men, clad in every variety of sordid rags, with long elfish earlocks, a wan and puny aspect, and a kind of drivelling leer and cunning in the eye, were a singular combination of Boz's Fagin, and Carlyle's Apes of the Dead Sea. Never, surely was so bewitched and strange a population. They had the sallow chalkiness of complexion peculiar to German tailors, and wore the huge bell-crowned black hat which they wear everywhere else in the world. But the women, as if to complete the confusion, were even comely, and their

fair round faces, with caps, and the coarse substantiality of the German female costume, perplexed the fancy upon the Sea of Galilee.

Artistic Leisurlie drew a Christian girl with her water jar, and tried to draw a Muslim boy. But he was afraid, and ran shouting away, laughingly pointing out one of his companions as a proper victim. But we started upon seeing him. Retzsch had been before us, and in his Mephistophiles has drawn only a horribly perfect likeness of that boy of Tiberias.

The morning was more merciful to the Sea of Galilee. The sun clomb out of the east over toppling clouds, while we skirted the lake, often walking our horses in the water.

The shore blazed with flowers. Had ours been the bridal train of Helen, skirting classic seas, the way could not have been more festally adorned. One rhododendron upon the shore of Galilee flames in my memory yet, a symbol of the tropics. The tangled luxuriance of flowers brushed against us, as if to secure in our hearts sweeter remembrances of Galilee than that of the apes of the Dead Sea, with long ear-locks who haunt the miserable Tiberias. These flowers are the relics of Capernaum, for so utterly has the city vanished from the earth. A few cattle grazed on the lake-side, or stood contemplative in the water. Two or three Bedoueen shepherds

gazed listlessly over the lake. It was a bewildering morning.

Every day as you journey in Palestine, the natural imagery of Jesus' words solicits your eye and touches your heart.

As you went down through flowery Zabulon to the sea you heard him say—"Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." As your eye wanders musingly over the landscape, and marks the solitary towns upon the hills, especially Saffet above you on the mountains, when you turn away from the sea of Galilee, you recall: "A city set upon an hill cannot be hid." Watching the simple and cumbrous processes of grinding grain between stones, usually done by women, you understand that "one shall be taken and the other left." As the camels and asses pass laden with goat-skins of wine, you understand why "no man putteth new wine into old bottles."

These things impress you with the reality of that life. If a teacher were now walking up and down the land, and were illustrating his words by the objects that met his eyes, you would constantly hear the familiar figures of the gospels. And these unchanged aspects of landscape and life surviving through all vicissitudes of race and fortune, annihilate time and make you the contemporary of Jesus, as in the Pestum temples you are a fellow-citizen of Pericles.

We emerged upon the upper valley of the Jordan It is broad and beautiful, but desolate, like the rest of the country. Scattered Bedoueen camps and cattle were the only population. Luxuriant grain waved on every hand, which is harvested by the Bedoueen, who come in for that purpose from the desert. Flowers grow rankly, and the plain was so spacious and mountain-walled, that there is nothing fairer in its kind, except perhaps, the Swiss valley of Unterwalden.

Crossing the main stream of the Jordan upon a picturesque ruined bridge, of Roman construction, which commands a view of the whole valley, and beyond which are remains of a Roman way, the only proper road in Palestine, we began to ascend the spurs of the Gebel Shekh, or Mount Hermon, toward Panias, and so reached our last station in the Holy Land.

XX.

PANIAS.

PANIAS is the true point at which to take leave of Palestine; for there what is most beautiful in human history mingles with what is most sublime. At Panias, the grace of Grecian story blends with the gravity of Christian ethics.

It is the site of that strange old legend of Plutarch, which Milton, Schiller, and Mrs. Barrett Browning have sung. Here were the statues of Pan and his peers and nymphs, which fell and shivered, with a moan far resounding over land and sea, at the moment of Christ's nativity. It was even more than a moan, and the words, "Great Pan is dead," swept across the Mediterranean, and were heard by certain mariners.

If, as that poet of the Syrian sunshine has said, "Ever does natural beauty steal in like air and envelope great actions," it is as often true of the sites of beautiful tradition. Certainly the fountain of Egeria, by its waving tapestry of maiden-hair fern, appeals to the eye to-day, as the story of the nymph

appeals to the imagination. Even were there no legend, your musing fancy at the fountain would instinctively create it.

So at Panias, a feeling of poetic tradition inheres in the landscape. It is not lovely and pathetic only, as the Syrian landscape generally is, except on those choice days, when Solomon in all his glory rules the flowery land. But as you turn from the great upper valley of the Jordan, and wind, ascending, among the warm, oak-covered slopes, and see at length the Italian picturesqueness which embosoms the town—then imagination demands a legend.

You find it, and it is the most striking of all.

You will well remember Panias, because you stand there as a man whose sympathy does not begin with a time or a person, but which acknowledges the same imperial truth and beauty under whatever masques.

It was the Cesarea Philippi of the New Testament. There is no record that Jesus was ever farther north than this spot. Yet here you wonder if he did not go on, and look at Damascus, as at Nazareth you wonder if he ever went down through Zabulon to the sea. Probably not; for had he done so, it would have reappeared in the imagery of his teachings, as did the other large and simple features of what he saw.

A lofty cliff overhangs Panias, and n its face the niche is hollowed in which the statues stood.

You will figure Jesus standing before the grotto; but he will not seem to you to scorn the statues as idols—which was the weakness of Mohammed at Mecca—but to reverence in them the holy instinct of beauty from which all art springs. He would not have shared the very error he condemned in idolatry, namely, the confusion of the substance with the shadow; but, whatever superstition may have seen in those statues, he would have recognized their significance. "I come not to destroy, but to fulfill." The invisible world made visible in these fair forms, he would say, is yet fairer than they suggest.

He who was baptized in Jordan, would not fright the delicate naiads. He who loved the birds of the air which nestled in the trees, would not harm, even in thought, the dryads and nymphs. He who saw in the untoiling flowers a richer royalty than Solomon's, would not have scorned the airy forms of their spirits in men's imaginations. He who perceived in all the lavish glory of nature, the presence of perfect love, would not have chided the instinct which gave it a personality of perfect beauty. The idolatry he would not endure; but to him the statue was a symbol, not an idol.

No, sweet singer, it is not true that,

> "Earth outgrows the mythic fancies
> Sung beside her in her youth,
> And those debonaire romances
> Sound but dull beside the truth."

For art is that debonaire romance in which truth is wedded with beauty. And that mythology was the great achievement of art in giving to your soul of "truest truth," the face of "fairest beauty."

Thus, as the sun sinks over the mountains, and through a fig-tree at the entrance of the grotto, the red light is distilled into golden green within, you remember that Jesus stood here, and wish that the source of the Jordan were indeed in the grotto, as was long supposed, that he might have been baptized in water flowing thence. As his image fades in your mind, and for the last time you look upon any landscape that he might have seen, your heart cries, even as he there might have cried:

> Do ye leave your rivers flowing
> All alone, O Naiades,
> While your drenched locks dry slow in
> This cold, feeble sun and breeze?
>
> From the gloaming of the oak-wood
> O ye Dryads, could ye flee?

At the rushing thunder stroke would
No sob tremble through the tree?

Have ye left the mountain places
Oreads wild, for other tryst,
Shall we see no sudden faces
Strike a glory through the mist?"

And, at midnight, as you lié musing in your tent, soothed by the gurgling murmur of the streams that make the Jordan, thinking those unutterable thoughts which throng the silence of Palestine, and will forever look solemnly after you, when you are gone, like the angel with flaming sword from the gate of Paradise upon Adam and Eve departing; then this answer fills the night, like a majestic wind:

"The lonely mountains o'er
And the resounding shore,
A voice of weeping heard, and loud lament,
From haunted spring and dale
Edged with poplar pale,
The parting Genius is with sighing sent.
With flower inwoven tresses torn,
The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

In consecrated earth,
And on the holy hearth,
The Lars and Lemures moan with midnight plaint,
In urns and altars round,
A drear and dying sound

Affrights the flamens at their service quaint,
And the chill marble seems to sweat,
While each peculiar power foregoes his wonted seat

MIRAG.

Peor and Baälim
Forsake their temples dim,
With that twice battered God of Palestine,
And moonèd Astaroth,
Heaven's queen, and mother both,
Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine:
The Lybic Hammon shrinks his horn.
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz mourn."

DAMASCUS.

"*Es Sham, Shereef:* the beautiful, the blessed."

"Ah! if but mine had been the Painter's hand
To express what then I saw, and add the gleam,
The light that never was on sea or land,
The consecration and the poet's dream."

Wordsworth.

"Air rather gardenny I should say."—*Melville's Moby-Dick.*

"Nor shall the garden during his pleasant distraction be termed otherwise than Paradise, with whose flowers he stuffs his bosom and decketh his turbant, shaking his head at their sweet savor."

Robert Withers, 1650.
Grand Signor's Seraglio.

—"O just Fakir, with brow austere,
Forbid me not the vine,
On the first day poor Hafiz' clay
Was kneaded up with wine."—

Hafiz. Emerson's Translation.

I.

THE EYE OF THE EAST.

Out of the South blew the halcyon day. The sky was like a precious stone. Opals and turquoises are the earth's efforts to remember that glowing sky and a day so fair.

We wound joyfully along under the snowy brow of Hermon. The path climbed northward over wide, bare hills, and the sound of running water filled the air. Presently we had crossed the summit of the ridge between the valley of the Jordan and the plain of Damascus. The streams ran no longer southward, but flowed with us. Our eyes were fixed upon the north, our hearts upon Damascus.

The summit of each hill anxiously gained, constantly disappointed us by revealing another. Conversation flagged and died away. Each rode on alone. A Turk passed by with a pompous retinue, and in the beauty of one of his train, which not even the jealous fullness of a huge black silk balloon could utterly conceal, Damascus came out to

meet us, as Venice comes to you in the first gondola.

There was nothing in the broad, desolate landscape to attract the eye or engage the mind. The interest of the morning was absorbed in one desire, painful from its intensity, the desire of beholding Damascus.

The last summit was reached. A vast plain stretched northward between azure lines of mountain, and a dim band across the plains united them. It was the foliage that embowers Damascus. Little dark spots were scattered on the else treeless plain. They were groves, far beyond the city. They lay like islands in the wilderness, but like a continent of green reposed Damascus upon the waste.

As we approached, the vastness became beauty and the vagueness form. Arcadia and Boccacio's garden faded in the enchantment of that vision. Clustering minarets and spires, as of frosted flame, glittered in the morning above the ambrosial darkness of endless groves and gardens. There were no details, only the thronging richness of infinite suggestion. It was the metropolis of romance, and the well-assured capital of oriental hope. Drawing aside distance like a veil, it challenged worship as it revealed its beauty. The glowing imagery of its description in eastern poetry paled before the reali-

ty. I did not wonder that the Emperor Julian called it the Eye of the East, nor that the Prophet gazed long at it and with tears, murmuring that there could be but one paradise and that his must be in heaven—then passed on as from the only syren he feared.

A forest of sparkling minarets, and the billowy beauty of endless foliage—that was all.

And like weary travellers, before whom flowery lawns of repose glide along the plain— like princes who see from far the aerial spires dreaming over the sleeping beauty—suddenly, as if we heard the cool measures of Damascus fountains and scented its garden odors, we plunged forward through the grain that swayed and sang around us, and loud shouting the cry of the gallopping Arabs, *Es sham, shereef*, the beautiful, the blessed, we dashed upon the full run over the plain, nor paused until our brows were cooled in the groves of Damascus.

Then we stopped, and reining up by a broken and greenly-mossed fountain, across which lay a bar of gold-dusted sunshine, in vision returned the September afternoon under the grape trellises and the figs of the Italian lake of Orta, which whispered, as a less of a greater—Damascus.

We moved slowly on over the broken pavement, chiding the walls that enclosed the gardens. But

their beauty would not be confined, and overflowed upon us, and arched the way, and softened it with strewn leaves, and enchanted the light into a soft, green brilliancy, and teemed with promise inexpressible.

At times the low singing of unseen water threaded the air as with faint laughter, laughing all the poets to sweet scorn who had described Damascus. The fig, the almond, the rounded chestnut, the walnut, the olive—all the stately and romantic trees were clustered here, as if the absolute aristocracy of foliage was only to be found in the girdle of the most ancient and the most beautiful of cities.

The path was a narrow lane winding between the walls that separated the groves, and crossing the clear-eyed brooks upon ruinous and pretty bridges. Across the vistas, where the light was brightest, passed women with water-jars upon their heads, or groups of shouting children, or laden camels or donkeys, or single figures stood in gay costumes—as if a generous destiny knew that only that figure in that spot was necessary to perfect satisfaction.

The lane ended in a gate, and immediately from the spacious and picturesque solitude of the trees we were plunged into the brilliant bewilderment of the bazaar. Golden Sleeve spurred rapidly along, and we were obliged to follow at the same speed to

keep him in sight. The crowd parted before us like a phosphorescent sea, so bright were the flowing robes. My brain reeled with the abrupt change from the luminous green silence of the environs to the twilight dimness of the bazaar, full of spicy odors, and gorgeous colors, and various forms, chequered with the penetrant sunshine that fell in burning drops through rents in the overshadowing matting.

There was scarcely time to see, none to think. We had constantly to keep vanishing Golden Sleeve in sight, nor did I lose him but once, when I saw cheesecakes—cheesecakes in Damascus! and wondering if they were made without pepper, I was bending to ask Agib, who was looking intently at me, when I saw Leisurlie just disappearing, and hurried rapidly after him, lest I should be implicated before the Grand Vizier, as an accessory to the manufacture of illegal cheesecakes.

Dazzled and overwhelmed by this first swift glance, I felt that Damascus was the most eastern East we had reached. The sunny desert and lonely Syria had erased from memory the West that still lingers in Cairo contaminated with black hats and carriages. Damascus was on the way to no Christian province and western trade had therefore not purged it of virgin picturesqueness. It was the sacred point of

departure for the Mecca caravan, and the port of caravans from Bagdad.

And when Golden Sleeve reined up and said—

"This is the hotel."

I responded—

"*Alla-hú-ak-bar.* (God is great)."

II.

EXIT VERDE GIOVANE.

The superb Syrian calls Damascus *Om-el-Donia*, the mother of the world. Nor is the traveller's fealty to Damascus disloyalty to Cairo. A poet, who sat in a café, tasting sherbet and singing, over the gurgling water, a song, which Golden Sleeve interpreted, sang—"O Damascus, O pearl of the East." But it is a crimson-hearted carbuncle rather.

The Damascene is the most mischievous subject of the empire, says the Turk. He is the most eastern of orientals, says the Frank. Not only, like other Muslim, does he guard his wife with jealousy, but, with the same care, he hides the splendor of the house in which she lives.

In the dim, unpaven, silent streets of Cairo, the high latticed house-fronts wear a picturesque charm, and woo you, as I have said, with more than Muslim propriety. But the paved streets, walled with low houses of coarse, yellow plaster, are ugly and forbidding in Damascus; nor is the city properly beautiful and characteristic, except in the bazaars,

which are unimaginable, and in the cafés, whither we will presently go.

Our own house, the hotel, was characteristic. The great street door opened by a narrow passage into a tessellated marble court, glistening with orange foliage, and musical with fountains. A gazelle played upon the pavements, upon which opened a lofty arabesqued alcove, and our own room opposite. From a marble basin upon the chequered marble floor of our room, leaped a delicate fountain, and three recesses were raised around it, each separated by curtains from the common floor, and each serving as a bed-chamber.

In the court, as we entered, the Syrian sun adorning him, and set in all the romance of mid-Damascus, stood Verde Giovane.

I regarded him gratefully, although I could scarcely forgive his scornful glance at me, when I sat, soaped, in the bath at Asyoot, upon the Nile. But Verde had so amply supplied me with the fun, the want of which, and that of music, are the traveller's great wants in the East, that I buried all feud. I remember—as a man the figure of the waistcoat he wore upon his wedding day—that smooth, round, English face in the Damascus sunshine, the face whose placidity seemed to say, "O East! vainly you strive to surprise me. Have I not given dejeu-

ners at Philæ; have I not gracefully dallied at Esne; have I not jostled on a camel over the desert, and am I not now here, in very Damascus, persuaded that the whole business is not jolly, but slow—that in vain your oriental silence will aim to drown the sound of Bow-bells in my heart?"

I do not remember Verde distinctly again. But some vague reminiscence haunts my mind, of a figure with a felt hat, a white cotton turban, and a check shooting-coat, rushing up and down the hotel stairs at Beyrout, apparently knocking at every door and shouting to the inmates—for there are no newspapers in Beyrout to record arrivals and departures—"Good-by, Smith; good-by, Jones. I'm just off for Aleppo."

Images of gay cavaliers bounding from their ladies' bowers rose in my mind, I remember, as I heard those farewells; and I leaned, romantic, from the balcony—to see the felt hat, and white turban, and check apparel, surmounting a jaded beast, and following a train of pack-horses slowly around the corner.

And so with oriental slowness, if not stateliness, the good little Verde Giovane rode out of Beyrout, and out of history.

III.

THE HOUSE BEAUTIFUL.

Are you disappointed as you thread these streets, by these repulsive walls? Do you tremble lest the dream of Damascus be dissolved by Damascus itself?

But you have already learned, by pleasant experience, that the clumsy, black, forbidding balloons, which passed you in those Cairene streets, enveloped Cairene wives, and were thus only the coarse rind of Hesperidian fruit. Such, too, are the Damascus houses.

O little faith! each Damascus house is a paradise The streets know only the exterior of the outer walls, and forbid to the passenger even the suspicion of beauty. Happily for us and for you, there is a Jew in Damascus—and may his tribe increase—who is a St. Peter, and holds the keys of many heavens.

He led us to the true House Beautiful, a dream palace, one of those which we frequent, when we are children, with caliphs and ladies. Such a dwell-

ing as you must needs fancy when you look through Lane's illustrated Arabian Nights, as through the mind of an Arabian poet, arabesqued with dreamy fancies—such a pavilion as Tennyson has built in music for Haroun El Rashid.

We turned suddenly from the unpromising street into a court, in whose centre played a fountain, surrounded with orange-trees, and from one side of which ascended a lofty staircase to a gallery overlooking the court. The orange-trees threw rich mosaics of shadow upon the pavement, and groups of men sat around, smoking tranquilly, as if they were only part of the furniture of the scene. Among them were Druse emirs from the Lebanon: princes not princely enough to be admitted into the inner delights.

"It is a perfected Seville," said Leisurlie, as we passed on and entered the inner court.

There, for the first time, I felt the just instinct of the Prophet in painting his Paradise from the materials furnished by the genius which he and the Easterns knew. The scene was a poem set to music. The light of the opaline day streamed into the spacious court as into a vase worthy of it. A large marble reservoir occupied the centre of the space, into which fountains of fairy device poured humming rills of water. The pave-

ment was tessellated marble, polished to a glow Huge pots of flowers stood near the walls, that blazed with all the brilliancy of positive color, and glistening, trailing, and blossoming plants were ranged along the marble-margined fountain. Roses, lemons, and orange-trees, grouped their foliage, clustered their flowers, and perfumed the sun

The light was not a glare, but a thick, odorous luminousness dashed with the cool dusk of shadows from the trees. Gazelles stood and ran in the court, filling the sunny bliss with the most delicate grace of life; and, among the fragrant trees, birds sang—why not the bul-bul, dying a melodious rose-death to crown our joy?

From the end of the court a broad, lofty staircase, with elaborately wrought balusters, ascended to a galleried recess, before which hung a vine of passion-flowers in blossom, transfigured in light, a tapestry of Paradise, and touching the pavement below, it trailed languidly upon the glossy marble.

Slightly raised from the level of the court, and entirely open to it, were alcoves loftily-arched, carpeted, and divanned with luxurious stuffs. The sides and ceilings of the alcoves were painted in dreamy arabesque. There are two kinds of arabesque in these houses—one is pannelled, carved in

wood, and so elaborately gilded that the effect is of a tapestry of the richest camel's hair shawls. The other is flat painting—the modern method—gayer and brighter, but not so deeply rich and delicate. The former usually surrounds the base of the alcove or apartment. But the latter haunts the depths of the upper walls and the ceiling with suggestions as subtle as the melody of Eastern verse.

The rooms opened into the largest alcove. They were quite empty and resembled grottoes, with their marble pavements, and mosaics of colored marble in the wall, and at the farther end a raised dais, spread with lounges where, under the arabesques, and in the sound of the falling water, the women lay in voluptuous repose, crusted with jewels and completing the Paradise.

IV.

HOURIS.

"The night shall be filled with music.
And the cares that infest the day
Shall fold their tents like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away."

Such beautiful women we saw.

Not, of course, the Muslim wives, but Hebrews, whose beauty is more imperial.

Many of the finest houses in Damascus are those of Jews, who cling there as they do everywhere else, although they occasionally suffer persecutions of relentless severity. There are about five thou sand Jews in Damascus, and they are often the chief financial officers of the Turkish government. They live in a quarter of the city by themselves, and as we left the shabby street and entered the courts of their houses, those chapters of old romance which relate the hidden luxury of the Hebrews, returned to my mind and were justified.

The best of these houses have two courts—three alcoves opening upon the inner one. Their romantic beauty can hardly be imparted by any descrip-

tion, nor do I know any pictures which fairly represent it. The Syrian light has not yet been caught upon the palette, and without that, the gorgeousness of the impression is lost.

These fountained and foliaged interiors, hushed in the warm blue silence of that sky, forever suggest a luxurious and poetic life. They suggest it so absolutely and strongly, that a child of the West contemplates them, fascinated, indeed, but frightened, as if it were wrong to follow, even in fancy, the outline they draw upon the possibilities of life. Dreaming by the singing waters, or reclining upon the sumptuous divans in the alcoves, the most Christian of Howadji, as he awaits the Houris, hears his heart repeating the mournful words of the Prophet—"There can be but one Paradise, and mine must not be here!"

Yet, as we lay, those May mornings, watching the gazelles, a year's life in Damascus promised the completest romance that the experience of this time could afford.

There would be no society—for technical "society" is unknown in the East—and no impulse from the magnetic "spirit of the age." But all the rest could be supplied.

You would hear the hum of the West dying away over the Mediterranean, into an incredible

echo. Its remembered forms would glide, phantoms, across the luxurious repose of existence. Zeno would dwindle into a myth, modern times into a dream, and the fancied life of Epicurus would be the shadow of your own. Had Epicurus no reason? Was the legend of the lotus-eaters all a fable? Is the unimaginable imagery of opium-dreams not worth the seeing?

—Self-indulgent, wasteful, selfish, coward before the tyrannous realities of life—these are the reproaches that would disturb your dream.

Yet would I still exhort him who sincerely loves the lotus and thrives upon it—for such there are—to dream that year in Damascus. For would he then return, and paint that year for us, the dream would be justified and celebrated in pictures and songs.

Let Zeno frown. Philosophy, common sense, and resignation, are but synonyms of submission to the inevitable. I dream my dream. Men whose hearts are broken, and whose faith falters, discover that life is a warfare, and chide the boy for loitering along the sea-shore, and loving the stars.

But leave him, inexorable elders, in the sweet entanglement of the "trailing clouds of glory" with which he comes into the world. Have no fear that they will remain and dim his sight. Those morning

vapors fade away—you have learned it. And they will leave him chilled, philosophical, and resigned, in "the light of common day"—you have proved it. But do not starve him to-day, because he will have no dinner to-morrow. Like a poor country lad who must go out to service in the dim and treacherous city, you will not suffer him to follow the water-courses, and know the flowers, and the sky, and the mountain landscape, in his first few years, lest their sublime memory should seduce him from his work, or sadden him in its doing. But the profoundest thinkers of you all, have discovered that an inscrutable sadness is the widest horizon of life, and the longing eye is more sympathetic with nature, than the shallow stare of practical scepticism of truth and beauty.

But while we muse, the ladies have entered the court—the family of a Jewish merchant, friend of our St. Peter—a mother and three daughters.

The mother is fat, and covered with brocades and cloths of gold, with bracelets, and necklaces, and rings, and her head is actually crusted with opals, pearls, rubies, carbuncles, and amethysts. She looks, as she stands in the sun, and conscious of the splendor of her appearance, as if she had just emerged from the bazaars, in which every merchant had thrown his choicest treasures at her as she passed

There is neither grace nor taste in her appearance. It is only an accumulation of riches in every kind, but each so genuine and magnificent, that the eye is satisfied.

She is not handsome, but her daughters are. They are tall and willowy, and stand among the oranges and oleanders, looking gravely at us. They have wreaths of pearls, and embroidered vests, and thick skirts heavy with richness, and they all walk upon pattens four or five inches high, of ebony inlaid with pearl, so that, in moving, they stalk about the court like giraffes imperfectly humanized. Their hair is densely black, and is braided in massive folds, studded with gems. Their eyebrows are shaved, and a smooth black arch of kohl supplies their places, and helps to unhumanize them. They are beautiful without the effect of beauty. The dark eyes are soft and curious, but have no lambent light of sympathy or intelligence. I should as soon undertake conversation with the black marble Venus, as with these silent and stately figures; and it is hard to bring my mind to the conception of their total ignorance and inexperience.

—The scene was like a Sultan's slave-market, and on the whole, rather sadder than my remembrance of a slave-merchant's house in Cairo. He had just

received several Abyssinian girls for sale. They stood, coarsely clad, and clustering together, in the darkest corner of the court—a group of olive-skinned children, who laughed at the strangers, and chatted among themselves, evidently hoping to be bought, and to taste the incomprehensible life of Christian Howadji.

The Damascene ladies withdrew after we had exchanged some words with the placid mamma, and presently, we saw them hurrying along the gallery above, chattering and laughing, like the Abyssinians, and looking down upon us as we retired, with the curiosity of children.

And, as we retired, the painful impression of their utterly vacant life was relieved by that girlish laughter.

V.

BAZAARS.

"Black spirits and white,
Blue spirits and gray,
Mingle, mingle, mingle."

CHRISTIANS and Saracens agree in reprobating the black hat. But the Damascenes declare open war against it. In 1432, Bertrandon de la Brocquière entered the city with a "broad beaver hat," which was incontinently knocked off his head. Naturally, his first movement was "to lift my fist," but wisdom held his hand, and he desisted, content to revenge himself by the questional inference that it was "a wicked race."

But if it be "wicked" to malign the black hat who shall be justified?

This was only a gentle illustration of the bitter hatred of Christians and all infidels, cherished by the Damascenes, who are the most orthodox of Muslim. Indeed, it is only within twenty years that an accredited English representative could reside in Damascus, and he maintains an imposing state. At present, some hundred European tourists

visit the city yearly, and the devout faithful find reasons for toleration in infidel gold, which they never found in argument.

Here, too, as everywhere in Syria, Ibrahim Pacha has been our ally. He permitted infidels to ride horses through the streets.

"O Allah!" exclaimed the religious Damascenes, who are termed by the Turks *Shami-Shoumi*—cursed rascals. "Your highness suffers Christians to sit as high as the faithful."

"No, my friends," responded Ibrahim, "you shall ride dromedaries, which will put you much above them."

We went into the bazaars to encounter these enemies of the black hat, and *ex-officio* riders of dromedaries. We had a glimpse of their beauty as we entered the city. But Eastern life is delightful in detail. It is a mosaic to be closely studied.

You enter, and the murmurous silence blends pleasantly with the luminous dimness of the place. The matting overhead, torn and hanging in strips, along which, gilding them in passing, the sun slides into the interior, is a heavy tapestry. The scene is a perpetual fair, not precisely like Greenwich fair, or that of the American Institute, but such as you frequent in Arabian stories.

Bedoueen glide spectrally along, with wild roving

eyes, like startled deer. Insane dervishes and santons meditate the propriety of braining the infidel Howadji. Shekhs from distant Asia, pompous effendi from Constantinople, Bagdad traders, cunning-eyed Armenian merchants meet and mingle, and many of our old friends, the grizzly-bearded, red-eyed fire-worshippers, somnolently curled among their goods, eye us, through the smoke they emit, as perfect specimens of the proper sacrifice they owe their deity. All strange forms jostle and crowd in passing, except those which are familiar; and children, more beautiful than any in the East, play in the living mazes of the crowd.

Shopping goes actively on. The merchant, without uncrossing his legs, exhibits his silks and coarse cottons to the long draped and veiled figures that group picturesquely about his niche. Your eye seizes the bright effect of all the gay goods as you saunter on. Here a merchant lays by his chibouque, and drinks from a carved glass sweet liquorice water, cooled with snow from Lebanon. Here one closes his niche and shuffles off to the mosque, followed by his boy slave with the chibouque. Here another rises, and bows, and falls, kissing the floor, and muttering the noon prayer. Everywhere there is intense but languid life.

The bazaars are separated into kinds. That of

the jewellers in enclosed, and you see the Jews, swarthy and keen-eyed servants of Mammon, busily at work. Precious stones miserably set, and handsfull of pearls, opals, and turquoises are quietly presented to your inspection. There is no eagerness of traffic. A boy tranquilly hands you a ring, and another, when you have looked at the first. You say "*la*," no, and he retires.

Or you pause over a clumsy silver ring, with an Arabic inscription upon the flint set in it. Golden Sleeve ascertains that it is the cypher of Hafiz. You reflect that it is silver, which is the orthodox metal, the Prophet having forbidden gold. You place it upon your finger with the stone upon the inside; for so the Prophet wore his upon the fore-finger, that he might avoid ostentation. It is a quaint, characteristic, oriental signet-ring. Hafiz is a common name, it is probably that of the jeweller who owns the ring. But you have other associations with the name, and as you remember the Persian poet, you suffer it to remain upon your finger, and pay the jeweller a few piastres. You do not dream that it is enchanted. You do not know that you have bought Aladdin's lamp, and as a rub of that evoked omnipotent spirits, so a glance at your ring, when Damascus has become a dream, will restore you again to the dim bazaar, and the soft eyes of

the children that watch you curiously as you hesitate, and to the sweet inspiration of Syria.

You pass on into the quarter where the pattens are made, inlaid with pearl, such as you remarked upon the feet of the kohl-eyebrowed houris. Into the shoemakers, where the brilliant leathers justify better poetry than Hans Sach's interminable rhymes though here is only their music, not their moral. You climb crumbling steps, and emerge from darkness upon the top of the bazaar, on a ledge of a Roman ruin, and look down into the sunny greenness of the great mosque, which you cannot more nearly approach. Then down, and by all the beautiful fabrics of the land, hung with the tin foiled letters that surround pieces of English prints, and which the color-loving eye of the oriental seizes as an ornament for his own wares, you pass into the region of drugs and apothecaries, and feel that you are about visiting that Persian doctor in Mecca who dealt in nothing but miraculous balsams and infallible elixirs, whose potions were all sweet and agreeable, and the musk and aloe-wood which he burned, diffused a delicious odor through the shop. Surely he was court-physician to Zobeide.

Golden Sleeve pauses before an old figure curled among the bottles and lost in reverie, saturated, it seems, with opium, and dreaming its dreams. This

is Zobeide's doctor. He had evidently the elixir of life among those sweet potions, and has deeply drunk. Life he has preserved; but little else that is human remains, except the love that is stronger than life. For, as he opens his vague eyes and be holds us, they kindle with an inward fire, as if they looked upon the philosopher's stone. That stone is in our purses; the old magician knows it, and he knows the charm to educe it.

He opens a jar, and a dreamy odor penetrates our brains. It is distilled of flowers culled from the gardens of the Ganges: or is this delicate perfume preferable—this zatta, loved of poets and houris, which came to the doctor's grandfather from Bagdad?

Attar of roses did Golden Sleeve suggest? Here is the essence of that divinest distillation of the very heart of summer. But, O opulent Howadji! no thin, pale, Constantinople perfume is this, but the viscous richness of Indian roses. As many wide acres of bloom went to this jar as to any lyric of Hafiz. It lies as molten gold in the quaint glass vase. The magician holds it toward the Syrian sun, and the shadow of a smile darkens over his withered features. Then, drop by drop, as if he poured the last honey that should ever be hived from Hymettus, he suffer it to exude into the little

vials. They are closely stopped, and sealed, and wrapped in cotton. And some wintry Christmas in the West the Howadji shall offer to a fairer than Zobeide those more than drops of diamond.

Nor this alone—but the cunning of Arabian art has sucked the secret of their sweetness from tea and coffee, from all the wild herbs of Syria, and from amber. In those small jars is stored the rich result of endless series of that summer luxuriance you saw in the vale of Zabulon. Sandal-wood to burn upon your nargileh, mystic bits to lay upon your tongue, so that the startled Bedoueen, as you pass in the bazaar, and breathe upon him in passing, dreams that you came from paradise, and have been kissed by houris.

Was it not the magic to draw from your purse the philosopher's stone? The court-physician of Zobeide, relapsing into reverie, smiles vaguely as he says salaam; as if the advantage were his—as if you were not bearing away with you in those odors the triumphs of the rarest alchemy.

Breathing fragrance, you enter a khan opening upon the bazaar, that of Assad Pacha, a stately and beautiful building, consisting of a lofty domed court, the dome supported by piers, with a gallery running quite around it. Private rooms for the choicest goods open out of the gallery. The court is full of

various merchandise, and merchants from every region sit by their goods, and smoke placidly as they negotiate.

But we have received visits in our hotel from an Armenian merchant, young and comely—why not Khadra's cousin ?—and he brought with him silks and stuffs at which all that was feminine in our natures swelled with delight. Tempted by his odors, we have come to this garden. The room is small and square, and rough-plastered. Upon the floor are strewn long deep boxes, and the comely young Armenian, in a flowing dark dress, reveals his treasures.

Scarfs, shawls, stuffs for dresses, morning-gowns and vests, handkerchiefs, sashes, purses, and tobacco-bags are heaped in rich profusion. They are of the true eastern richness, and in the true eastern manner they rely upon that richness for their effect, and not upon their intrinsic tastefulness. The figures of the embroideries, for instance, are not gracefully designed, but the superb material suffices. They imply that there are none but beautiful women in the world, and that all women are brunettes. As the quiet merchant unfolds them, they have the mysterious charm of recalling all the beautiful brunettes who have reigned, Zenobias, and Queens of Sheba, and Cleopatras, in the ruined realm of your past life.

But, Northerners and Westerners, we remember another beauty. We remember Palma Vechio's golden-haired daughter, and the Venetian pictures, and the stories of angels with sunny locks, and the radiant Preziosa. The astute Armenian knows our thoughts. From the beginning was not the oriental merchant a magician?

For while we sit smoking and delighted, the merchant, no less wily than the court-physician of Zobeide, opens the last box of all, and gradually unfolds the most beautiful garment the Howadji have ever seen. The coronation robes of emperors and kings, the most sumptuous costumes at court-festivals, all the elaboration of western genius in the material and in the making of dresses, pale and disappear before the simple magnificence of this robe.

It is a bournouse or oriental cloak, made of camel's hair and cloth of gold. The material secures that rich stiffness essential in a superb mantle, and the color is an azure turquoise, exquisite beyond words. The sleeves are cloth of gold, and the edges are wrought in gold, but with the most regal taste. It is the only object purely tasteful that we have seen. Nor is it of that safety of taste, which loves dark carriages and neutral tints in dress, but magnificent and imperial, like that of Rachel when

she plays Thisbe, and nets her head with Venetian sequins. If the rest imply that all women are beautiful and brunettes, this proclaims the one superb blonde, queen of them all.

"Take that, Leisurlie, it was intended from the beginning of the world for an English beauty."

"Oh! *kooltooluk!* there is not a woman in England who could wear it."

Through the dewy distances of memory, as you muse in the dim chamber upon all who might worthily wear that garment, passes a figure perfect as morning, crowned with youth, and robed in grace, for whose image Alpine snows were purer and Italian skies more soft. But even while you muse it passes slowly away out of the golden gates of possibility into the wide impossible.

As we stroll leisurely homeward, it is early afternoon. But the shops are closed—strange silence and desertion reign in the bazaars—a few dark turbanned Christians and Jews yet linger, and a few children play.

"They are gone to the cafés and gardens," says Golden Sleeve.

—And we follow them.

VI.

CAFÉS.

Not only the interiors and the bazaars bewilder you in Damascus.

Everywhere in the humming gush of fountains, you hear the low musical laughter of Undine. Thus, through the heart of the city, the cool cedars of Lebanon sing their shade. The flashing jets in the silent and sunny courts, like winks of that glancing spirit, soothe your mind long before you suspect the reason. In the bazaars and chief streets that laugh is stifled, but when you turn aside, just outside the bazaars, and pass beyond the gates, you are on the banks of the Abana and Pharpar—rivers of Damascus.

In this realm of water, are the cafés, of which, sipping a *petit verre* in the Algerine café, upon the Parisian Boulevards and looking at the Arab women there, some Howadji have vaguely dreamed. But nothing in civilized cities reminds you of these resorts. They are open spaces upon the banks of the streams, shielded by heavy foliaged trees, from the

sun, and secluded entirely from any noise but that of rushing water.

The finest café is entered through a large room, whose walls are striped in the usual manner, and which is furnished with shabby stools, and multitudes of nargilehs, chibouques, and glass cups for sherbet and coffee. It opens into a cool, green seclusion, through which shoots a flashing stream, crossed by a little bridge.

No café in the world, elsewhere, can offer a luxury so exquisite. In the hot day it proffers coolness and repose. We sit upon the little bridge, and through the massive foliage around us, catch gleams of the color upon the nearest walls. The passionate sun cannot enter unrestrained, but he dashes his splendor against the trees, and they distil it in flickering drops of intense brightness upon the smooth, hard, black ground. We have his beauty but not his blaze. Supreme luxury! Even the proud sun shall help to cool us by the vivid contrast of the flecks of his light, with the mellow shadow in which we sit.

Beneath leaps the swift river, gurgling gladness as it shoots, like a joyful boy in running. It sweeps forever around an old greened wall below. It is forever overhung by blossoming figs, and waving vines and almonds, which bower it as it passes,

far overleaning to hear its forest tales of Lebanon. Around us sit figures clad in rainbow brilliance, which, in placing there, nature has preceded art and satisfied imagination. We sip sherbet of roses or smooth Mocha coffee.

—Nera! It is the fountained kiosk of Damascus.—

Yet these resorts, with all their shabby stools and coarse matting, convey a finer sense of luxury than any similar attempt in western life. In view of the purpose desired, these cafés are the triumph of art, although nothing can be simpler and ruder than the whole structure. They are the broadest and most obvious strokes in the adaptation of natural advantages to the greatest enjoyment. Thu streams are as wild as mountain brooks, the trees as untrimmed as in the forest, yet the combination satisfies the strongest desire of a hot climate—coolness and repose. These resorts are the country serving the city, but not emasculated of its original character. It serves the city as the negro slave clad in his native costume, in bright trinkets and with braided hair, serves the citizen. As London in its vast parks secures for itself the crown of city luxury, namely, the unchanged aspect of fields and woods, so that awakening upon Regent's Park, you shall seem, in the lowing and tranquil grazing of cattle, and in

the singing of birds in the morning silence, to be a hundred miles from men; so is it here, except that here is the golden atmosphere of romance and of the natural picturesque. But the London parks are only pastoral landscapes hung upon the city walls. The cafés of Damascus are passionate poems. It is the difference between a mild-eyed milkmaid and the swart magnificence of Zenobia.

The best western suggestions of these Damascus delights are those German gardens, where you sit smoking and sipping in pleasant arbors, listening to pleasant music, as at Nuremberg, under the picturesque old walls. But here again is all the difference between Albrecht Dürer and Hafiz. There is a marked vein of prose in everything German. The cafés of Damascus are pure poetry.

Damascus in this regard makes Paris poor. The most brilliant cafés of the Boulevards are only rococo, and artificial, measured by this natural art. They are elaborated *à merveille.* But the place itself differs from the Damascene type not less than the pretty grisette, in her piquant perfection of French attire, differs from the loosely robed, and jewelled, and golden-complexioned Syrian woman, not less than the clarified French coffee differs from the thick richness of Mocha. You sit upon the broad, gay street in Paris eating ices thicker and

richer than those of the East, which are thin and watery like snow, watching the gaudy equipages, the staring parvenu houses, the hats, coats, bonnets and dresses—all the bright tinsel of Parisian life—and over your eager mind, like a lull in a gusty day, steals the vision of Damascus, with the silent coolness of green shadows, and the gurgling coolness of rushing streams.

Art, in oriental luxury, is only the hint of nature broadly developed. The luxury of Paris is the perfection of artificiality. Nature is as much banished from it as simple instincts and natural feeling from Parisian society. From the Boulevards your eyes rise to the calm blue sky, with wonder and insatiable longing. It hangs over the city like the long-suffering grace of God over human sin.

But as we sit enchanted by the gushing waters of Damascus, and anticipate Paris, as full-hearted boys the heartlessness of manhood, and long for music, the instinctive complement of such luxury, even as the boy sings when he is happiest, we are made aware, in the shrill shriek and discord of the Arabian instruments and voices, of the imperfection of oriental luxury. It is fragmentary, and not complete. The love of nature in an oriental, is rather an animal instinct than a spiritual appreciation. Hence the universal absence of what we call taste, which does

not imply that the universal appearance of richness in the East is positively tasteless, but simply unworked into genuine artistic results. The effect is is often that of the finest art. But the difference, as I said, is that of a palette covered with rich pigments and a brilliant picture. Yet remember how much more valuable for subtle suggestion is Titian's palette than most pictures that were ever painted.

This luxury is fragmentary and incomplete. A Pacha clad in the costliest robes, and smoking a gemmed chibouque, receives you in a coarsely-plastered chamber, where you recline upon cushions which no Parisian salon possesses. Or in these fine Damascus houses, between the ceiling wrought in dream-arabesques, and the delicate point-lace-like work of the walls, a broad strip of dingy plaster in tervenes, broken with irregular, shapeless windows Nor have the houses the slightest air of home, or domestic comfort.

It is the general character of magnificence, and the occasional pursuit of details into the most subtle and aerial perfection, which gives the tone to your impression. It is the splendor of a mine, streaked with earth, but in which some happy touch has wrought certain points into marvellous beauty—the wealth of a quarry, in which occasional genius has carved single blocks into more than Grecian grace.

VII.

UNCLE KÜHLEBORN.

So, meditating luxury, and leaving the bubbling waters, we stroll into the city, confessing with the Turkish poet, that green trees, and flowing waters, and beautiful faces combined, are an antidote against melancholy.

Pausing at a small door, we enter the bath. For, as becomes a city so affluent in water, the baths of Damascus are the finest in the East, and so fantastic is the spectacle of their life, that you must needs fancy them temples of Undine's uncle Kühleborn.

The lofty hall which we enter is lighted through a dome, and is paved with varied marbles. Three deep alcoves are raised above the court, in the sides of the hall, and in the centre of the pavement is a fountain, upon whose margin stand clusters of nargilehs, wreathed with their serpentine tubes. A mat is spread for us in the most spacious alcove. A boy holds a fine linen veil before us while we disrobe, and instantly an attendant girds us with linen over the shoulders and around the loins, and a flat turban

of the same is pressed upon our heads. Then carefully treading in clumsy wooden pattens, which slide upon the polished floor, we enter a small room.

It is misty with steam, and warm, entirely bare, and of smooth marble walls and floor. We pass into another of the same kind, hotter and more misty, and a group of parboiled spectres regard us languidly as we advance.

Then we emerge in a long oblong hall, reeking with moist heat, in which we gasp and stare at the figures—some steeped to the neck in a cauldron of steaming water, their shaven heads floating, like livid pipkins, upon the surface—some lying at full naked length upon the floor, in a torpor of sensual satisfaction—some sitting meekly upright upon little stools, and streaming with soap-suds, while nude official individuals with a linen fig-leaf, rush rapidly about with a black horse-hair mitten upon the right hand, making occasional sallies upon the spectres, and apparently flaying them with the rough hand of hair.

These spectres are all shaven, and profoundly solemn. They undergo parboiling, boiling, soaping, and flaying, with the melancholy seriousness of western gentlemen dancing at a ball, heroically resigned to happiness.

But we may not pause. Persuasive hands are urging us toward the cauldron. We are suddenly denuded, and hover affrighted on the very verge of the steaming abyss. But we will not be pipkins. We will not join that host of shaven Saracens, who look at us from the cauldron as lifelessly—for *les extrèmes se touchent*—as the victims in the ice glared upon Dante and his guide. We remember Hylas with an exquisite shudder. We gasp "*la, la* (no, no)," with an emphasis that makes us the focus of all the languid glances in the misty limbo.

Then the persuasive hands urge us toward a door opening into a small marble chamber. A fountain gushes hot water at the side, a linen is suspended over the door, and we are removed from the view of the pipkins. The thick hot air is absorbed at every pore, and the senses are soothed as with opium fumes. We pant, resistless, sitting upon the floor, streaming with perspiration. Beyond, struggling, we see a hairy-handed spectre enter under the linen of the doorway. He rubs his finger upon our naked bodies, as a barber rubs the chin he is about shaving. The hairy-handed says, "*Täib, täib* (good, good)," and lays the Howadji flat upon his back.

Sitting by his side, he dips the hair-glove into the running water, and rubs with a smooth, steady

firmness the inside of the infidel arm. Not a spot escapes. You muse of almonds in the process of blanching, and are thus admitted to mysterious sympathies. You are no longer panting and oppressed. You respire heat and mist at every pore, and perceive yourself of the consistency of honey. The hairy-handed whispers coaxingly, as you sink more deeply in the sense of liquefaction, "*Howadji, bucksheesh.*" You look at him with the languid solemnity of the pipkins in the cauldron, but are sure that you would only gurgle and bubble, should you attempt to speak.

The hairy-handed turns you like a log, and like the statue of great Ramses at Memphis lying with its face in the mud, so lies the happy Howadji with his nose upon the wet marble floor, torpid with satisfaction, while his back is peeled in the same skillful manner.

The ceremony of the glove is finished, and you lie a moment as if the vague, warm mist had penetrated your mind. A stream of clear hot water is poured over you, and pleasure trickles through your very soul.

Then lo! the hairy-handed, smiling upon you as you lie, and whispering, "*Bucksheesh, Howadji,*" steps with his naked feet upon your spine, and stands on your body between your shoulders. But

he has scarcely touched the back, than he slides off down the ribs, his large moist feet clinging to your back. So, sliding and slipping, and kneading your body, he advances toward the feet, accumulating in your misty mind new ideas of luxury, and revealing to your apprehension the significance of the Arabic word "*kief*," which implies a surfeit of sensual delight. He steps off and leaves you lying, and there you would willingly lie forever, but that he returns with a pan of soap and a mass of fibres of the palm-tree—the oriental sponge.

The next moment you are smeared in suds, from the neck to the heels, and it is rubbed in with a vigor that makes you no longer Ramses in the mud of Memphis, but a Grecian wrestler, anointed and oiled with suppleness. He rolls you over, and your corporeal unctuation is completed.

Then hairy-hand sits you upright upon the floor, like the mild-eyed lotus-eaters, who sit, sudded, upon stools in the vicinity of the pipkins, and suddenly the soap is planted in your hair, and you are strangling in the suds that stream over your face. You cannot speak or gasp; for the hairy-hand mercilessly rubs along your face up and down, as if you were merely Marsyas; and as you sit half-terrified, and with a ghostly reverie of anger at your heart—for positive emotions are long since melted—you

perceive a burning stream of water flowing over you, and washing soap and rage away. Hairy-hand deluges you with the hot water which he bails out of the fountain with the pan that held the soap. Then folds his hands meekly to signify that you are done, and whispers gently, "*Bucksheesh, Howadji.*"

You rise and enter the Sudarium beyond. No unbelieving Verde Giovane is there to scoff; but another spectre approaches with razor and scissors. You tremble lest you be too much done to resist the shaving process, lest you re-enter the world utterly bald as a Saracen. But a glance at the pipkins nerves your heart. Feebly this time, and truly with liquid accents, you murmur, "*la, la,*" and the spectre with razors vanishes into the mist with a scornful smile. You pass into the next chamber, and clean linens are thrown around you as when you entered, and you stumble along upon the clumsy pattens out into the large hall.

You reel into the alcove and stretch yourself at length upon the mattress covered with gold-fringed linen. A boy lays other linen over you, skillfully flapping a heavenly coolness as he lets it fall. Your eyes close in dreamy languor. Something smooth touches your lips; it is the amber mouth of a nargileh tube, upon whose vase, filled with tobacco

from Shiraz, a bit of aloes is burning. It is the same boy, who kneels and hands it to your lips, and offers in the other hand, a cup of orange sherbet.

You sip and inhale, and a few moments, restful as a year to the sleeping princess, pass. Then you are gently raised. All your drapery is changed, and fresh, fair linen is spread over you again, with the same exquisite coolness in falling.

Your eyes wander in reverie around the hall. In one alcove, lie a pair of Sybarites like yourself, also dreamily regarding you, and your glances meet and mingle, like light vapors in the air. Another is praying—bending, and kissing, and muttering, others are robing and disrobing, entering or going out. The officials move as quietly as shadows, and perfect silence reigns under the dome, broken only and deepened by the plash of the fountains. Clouds of azure smoke wreathe away, and the faint bubbling of the water in the nargileh hums soothingly through the space. By reason of the windows in the dome, the bath is lighter than the bazaar, and you watch through grated windows opening upon the bazaar, the passers in that dim region, the camels, the horses gayly caparisoned, the Bedoueens, and sakkas, and bright-robed merchants, who all go by like phantoms. One of the camels turns his lazy neck,

and looking through the bars at you, your heart yearns toward MacWhirter, and you remember the desert as an antediluvian existence.

But the boy kneels again, and with firm fingers squeezes your arm slowly from the shoulder to the finger-tips. Then he proceeds along your legs. Firmly but gently at first, then more strongly kneading, and passes off at your fingers, cracking every joint, nor unmindful of the toes. He retires and leaves you to another interval of dreams, smoke, and sherbet. The draperies are changed, again with sweet coolness in the changing. Finally, a strong man, Uncle Kühleborn himself, kneels behind you seriously and lifts you up. He thrusts his arms under yours, and bends you ruthlessly backward and forward, straining and squeezing in every direction, forcing your body into postures which it can never know again, actually cracking your backbone, until seizing you quite off the mattress, old Kühleborn twists you upon his knee into an inextricable knot, then suffers you to fall exhausted upon the couch.

It is the last stroke, the crown of delight. You exist in exquisite sensation, but are no longer conscious of a body. You comprehend an "unbodied joy whose race is just begun." The cool, fragrant dimness permeates your frame. You fall softly into sleep as into an abyss of clouds.

VIII.

EXODUS.

THE poem of the traveller's life in Damascus thus sings itself in three cantos, the Bath, the Bazaar, and the Café.

There are certain historical associations with the city of which you think little when you are there. The only one that you naturally remember, floats across your Café and Bath-dreams, because it is a reality of romance, as well as a fact of history, and it is, that in the defence of Damascus against the Crusader Baldwin, King of Jerusalem, Salah-ed-deen, or our familiar Saladin, first appeared in arms.

Nor are the scriptural associations of Damascus especially prominent in your mind. You remember that as a town early mentioned in the Bible, it is reckoned the oldest of cities, and a hundred times a day your heart echoes to the sound of waters in the scriptural words, "Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus." And always, as you "arise and go into the street, which is called Straight," the imperial

figure of Paul accompanies you. But beyond these, the present interest and beauty of the city quite suffice.

In its own religion, Damascus is famously orthodox. The Damascenes are fanatical, as are the Christians in Rome; and, as the latter treated the Jews as dogs, and shut them up nightly within the Ghetto, so up to a very recent period, the Muslim in Damascus treated the Christians. This gives your sense of justice great satisfaction. You are glad to find the account of bigotry well balanced. Glad, perhaps, to discover that fanaticism is not confined to your own brethren in faith.

Toleration is the great lesson of travel. As, in a small way, a man may mortify spiritual pride, by strolling on Sunday in a western city, from church to church, each of which is regarded by its sect as the true strait gate, so, in a large way, is he benefited by wintering in Rome and then shipping at Naples for the East. For thus he learns the truth emphasized with all magnificence, that neither upon this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, is the only spot of worship. In Rome you have seen the pomp of the world's metropolis surrounding the Pope. In Damascus, the meanest beggar in the bazaar would spit upon the Pope with loathing.

Cadaverous Calvin, also, burning Servetus, is an

edifying subject of reflection, as you sip sherbet in Damascus. For you may well despair if the chains of prejudice are not somewhat loosened when you find yourself there. It certainly will not be necessary to elevate Islam above your own faith, or to wax melodious over the hareem. But, if you are a man, it will be necessary to recognize the imperial genius of the Prophet of the Saracens, and to be glad that to them was given a teacher after their kind. It will be also necessary to reflect, that the Eastern is a better Muslim, than the Western is Christian.

Thinking these thoughts, you ride slowly out of Damascus, watching the stern Muslim eyes that look at you as you pass. It is a sunny May morning, and the thought of looking for the last time upon a scene so strange and fair, touches it into stranger and fairer beauty. St. Peter guides us to the gate that opens toward the Lebanon. He stands in it and bows a smiling "*buon' viaggio*," the last words he will ever speak for us, and the old Hebrew turns back again to his many heavens.

We climb a space of the mountain, and Golden Sleeve beckons to stop and look behind us. We do so. It is the famous view of Damascus from the Salaheeyah.

Henceforth, when you are called to tell, as all travellers are, the most beautiful object you have

seen in your wanderings, you will answer, Damascus, from the Salaheeyah. Its delicate and fairy elegance cannot be described. Beside the dark green and the flashing minarets, there is all the detail, the exquisite intricacy of lines, which seduce the enamored eye to trace all their elaborations. So looked, to the Prophet's vision, the clustering graces of Paradise. I do not wonder that he passed and praised. But I do that he could pass and not enter.

Higher you climb the steep mountain path, and higher. Farther removed, the beautiful vision quivers, golden and green, a mirage upon the plain. A step—a turn—it has faded forever, and bare, monotonous mountains gloom around you. Winding lines of greenness mark the water-courses, and a few straggling, miserable huts are the signs of life As if utterly to obliterate Damascus from recent experience, a cold wind blows bitterly through the mountain gorges, and, as we pause at evening, we are glad to creep into a house, and remember the "Pearl of the East," as in January, June is remembered.

Through cold morning showers, we are again upon our way. We climb and climb, still in a sad mountain region, and the chill day reminds us that this bright summer of eastern travel draws to a close

Heedless of wind and rain, that thought is our grave companion through the Anti-Lebanon. And, as the lover of woods and fields, going down through crimson autumn to the winter, suddenly perceives in extreme October the ghost of June gliding over the landscape, pallid, and with misty mien—even the Indian summer, renewing the feeling, but not the form, of the vanished year—so we, with faces westward bent, leaving the romance of the East behind us, turn yet another page. For, as that afternoon, we crossed the ridge of the range, the noble panorama of the valley of the Bekaa, which separates the Anti-Lebanon from the Lebanon, unrolled beneath us. The range of the Lebanon towered along its farther side, like the Bernese Alps seen from the Jura over the valley of the Aar.

As we skirted the mountain-side and descended, in the pensive glory of the waning day, we saw the six stately, solitary columns of Baalbec. Their countenance was "as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars," and naturally so; for the Syrians assert that Baalbec is the house of the forest of Lebanon built by Solomon.

The sun was setting, and its last light flashed far along the snowy peaks of the Lebanon, which rose sublime from the purple evening silence of the valley. At the lower end of the range which we had

just descended, the tawny Hermon crouched over the vale. Birds wheeled and darted around the exquisite portico of the temple. No triumph of art in my experience was profounder than that of Baalbec in that moment; for the melancholy ruins imparted human grandeur to the sunset splendor of nature.

IX.

BAALBEC.

Baalbec is the ecstacy of Corinthian architecture, and impressed by its grandeur and beauty, you remember, with a blessing, the Roman Emperor, Theodosius, I think, who forbade the Christian Bishop to destroy the Pagan temple, the gem of the Antoninian period.

It is Roman, indeed; dating, that is, from a time when the prime of Greek art was long, long past, and when the East was Roman. Therefore it is not of the purest art. It has not the supreme excellence of the Parthenon, nor of the early Egyptian temples—each the perfection of their kind.

But whether the inherent inspiration of the East forbade the erection of temples at the very foot of Lebanon, which had not some lingering spirit of the true Greek grace, or whether, as is most probable, they were reared by Grecian artists, in whom flickered yet some flame of the old Greek fire, yet the ruins of Baalbec are among the most perfect remains in the world. There is nothing in Rome itself so

imposing, nothing which so nearly attains that spiritual elegance of impression which marks Greek architecture.

The Roman character is impressed upon Baalbec, in the massiveness, not quite relieved into grace, of which it yet has the imperfect form, and wherein lies, as in all technical Roman architecture, the chief fault. The intrinsic success of the Egyptian architecture is in this, that it completely attains the massiveness at which it aims, and it implies and seeks nothing farther. The Greek, on the other hand, softens that strength, without losing it, into beauty. The Roman, attaining neither, like plated-ware grown old, is neither genuine silver nor respectable copper. Its strength is clumsy, not sublime; its beauty is artificial, not sincere.

The eclecticism of Rome pervaded every part of its development. The empire, like a vapor, spread over the earth, and like a vapor, it was variously tinged by the colored soils on which it rested. Rome was great only in overpowering might, in what, as characteristic of single men, we call physical strength. Its intellectual, and artistic, and religious aspect was but an imitation of the Greek. It was not a development, as was Greek culture of the Egyptian; but, like all imitation, it was a decline Rome was a gladiator, Greece was a poet.

And in that difference lies the difference of their influence upon history.

But here, in Baalbec, is a softer strain. The statue of the gladiator wins the eye, although the Apollo is unrivalled. And adding to the picturesque variety and intrinsic beauty of Baalbec, its superb landscape setting at the head of the valley of Bekaa, and to these, the romantic associations which cling around it and deepen its impression, even as clustering and waving vines wreathe with grace more delicate, the grace of sculpture, Baalbec stands forever in memory, as one of the truly imposing relics of the world.

The six solitary columns are its marked and rememberable features. The temple in which are the niches for the idols is yet elegant, and still suggests the Syrian Baal, under which name our ever divine Apollo was worshipped. And well worshipped was he in this spacious valley, along whose floor he struck his glory, making perfect summer; whose mountain walls he made his lyre, striking their snow-streaks with quivering light, like chords swept with trembling fingers, until all the loveliness of the plains and the loftiness of the hills flashed a symphony of splendor to the god of day.

We stroll, musing, among the ruins. We have no compass or yardstick. We neither measure the

columns, nor calculate the weight of the stones. Wood and Hawkins have exhausted that department, and Wood, the best authority on Baalbec, wonders that the Roman authors are so silent about it, and can find only in John of Antioch any mention of the temples. An image of the great temple appears upon medals of Septimius Severus; but Antoninus Pius is supposed to have built it. Saracens, Persians, Earthquakes, and Christians have raged against it. In the time of Heraclius, the Saracens captured it, and incredible riches rewarded them, and in the year 1401, Timour the Tartar smote the beauty of Baalbec. When he thundered against it, it was called by the Greeks, Heliopolis, City of the Sun. And its vague fame shines through history, as I dreamed of beholding Jerusalem glitter among the Judean mountains.

Listen for the last time in Syria, for the sounds which have long died away into the dumbness of antiquity, and you shall hear the hum of this city of Solomon, the great point of the highway from Tyre to India, when Zenobia's Palmyra was but a watering-station in the desert. Then, nearer, the clang of Roman arms and trumpets, the scream of the eagles of Augustus, and the peal of religious pomp around a temple dedicate to Jupiter, and ranking among the wonders of the world. Nearer

still, the hushed cry of desert hordes of Bedoueen, of Persians, the muttering of Christian priests—shreds and fragments all of its old pæan, one more death-struggle of another memorable life.

The oriental authors praise Baalbec as the most splendid of Syrian cities, proud with palaces, graceful with gardens; and with the triumphant mien of imperial remembrance, it looks after you as you ride slowly down the valley of the Bekaa, and its glance leaves in your mind a finer strain in your respect for Rome.

All day it watches you; all day you turn in your saddle as you advance through the valley which has Egyptian warmth of climate, and in which water never stagnates, and look back upon the six stately columns. All the men in the valley salute you. Even the women are less chary of their charms, and when the tent is pitched at evening, and Leisurlie begin to sketch, the children crowd around and look wonderingly upon his work and its results. But, if he attempt to draw them, the handsome boys bound away, because he looks at them, and only the unhandsome remain.

But one stands leaning against a tree at a little distance, heedless of his fellows and of the Howadji. The pensive grace of his posture, the dark beauty of his face, and the suppleness of his limbs, arrest

the artist's eye. He sketches him, and a figure more graceful than the Apollino has justified art and asserted nature upon the twilight plain of Baalbec, whose columns glimmer and fade in the distance and the dark.

X.

NUNC DIMITTIS.

THE Arabian poets sing truly of Lebanon, that he bears winter upon his head, spring upon his shoulders, and autumn in his bosom, while summer lies sleeping at his feet.

Up from that summer, Baalbec its last blossom for us, the Howadji sadly climbed. The mountain-sides were terraced to the highest practicable point, and planted in grain. But, wherever the sun favors, the lustrous vines lie along the ground, goldening and ripening the life that is immortal in the *vino d'oro* of the Lebanon. The path is thronged with laden mules coming from Beyrout. The sun blisters our faces. They are set westward now, but our hearts cling to the sleeping summer at the feet of Lebanon.

At noon the ridge is passed, and we look toward the sea. The broad valleys and deep gorges of the mountains open themselves to the illimitable West,

which streams into them full of promise and the sun. Lebanon is a country, rather than a mountain, and our way is not a swift descent, but a slow decline. Little villages are perched upon various points, and a Druse woman passes, crowned with the silver horn. Across a broad ravine, miles away, we see as the westering sun slants down the mountain, a melancholy fortified old building, and remember Lady Hester Stanhope. But there is no longer eagerness in our glances, and there is profound sadness in our hearts.

In a golden sunset, the tent was pitched for the last time, upon a high mountain point, overlooking the sea. As we watched the darkening Mediterranean, from a little gray village high upon a cliff beyond, fell the sweet music of the evening bell.

It was the knell of the East. Sweet and clear it rang far down the dark calm of the valley, and out upon the evening sea. The glory of oriental travel was a tale told. The charm of nomadic life was over. Like youth, that travel and charm come but once, and because the East is the most picturesque scene of travel possible to us, the moon in rising over our last camp, and flowing dreamily over the placid slopes of the Lebanon, was but the image of memory, which steeps the East forever in pensive

twilight. So finally lie in the mind all lands we have seen. The highest value of travel is not the accumulation of facts, but the perception of their significance. It is not the individual pictures and statues we saw in Italy, nor the elegance of Paris, nor the comfort of England, nor the splendor of the Orient in detail, which are permanently valuable. It is the breadth they give to experience, the more reasonable faith they inspire in the scope of human genius, the dreamy distances of thought with which they surround life. In the landscape which we enjoy as a varied whole, what do we care for the branching tree or the winding river, although we know that without tree and river there would be no landscape? When Italy, and Syria, and Greece, have become thoughts in your mind, then you have truly travelled.

The next morning, under the mulberries and over the stones, we descended to Beyrout, and it was startling to feel how suddenly the spell was broken. A few fat Franks, and a few sailors, and a few bales of cotton, and much sea-port stench, and the mongrel population of a Levantine city, dissolve the dream. Strange in Beyrout is the image of the East, in its still picturesqueness, in its placid repose. A few turbans and snowy beards glide spectrally among the hogsheads and boxes, like

the fair forms of dreams lingering upon the awakening eye, among the familiar furniture of the chamber.

Yet Beyrout is built upon a long and lovely slope of the Lebanon, and has fine gardens and trellissed balconies overhanging its most summer sea. There, on some enchanted morning, you may inhale for the last time the fragrant Shiraz, taste the last sherbet of roses, and be lost once more in the syren's song.

But some May evening, as you recede over that summer sea, and watch the majesty of Lebanon robing itself in purple darkness, and, lapsing deeper into memory, behold the dreamy eyes of Khadra, and the widowed "Joy of the Earth," and the "Delight of the Imagination," and the "Pearl of the East," until night and the past have gently withdrawn Syria from your view, do you sigh that the East can be no longer a dream but a memory, do you feel that the rarest romance of travel is now truly ended, do you grieve that no wealth of experience equals the dower of hope, and say in your heart—

"What's won is done, Joy's soul lies in the doing!"

—Or as a snow-peak of Lebanon glances through the moonlight like a star, do you fear lest the poet

sang more truly than he knew, and in another sense,

"The youth who farther from the East
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended,
Until the man perceives it die away
And fade into the light of common day."



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